



# Humanities for What? A Canadian Perspective

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Canadian Federation for the  
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Fédération canadienne  
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# Overview of Canadian scene

- 95 universities in Canada
- 83 universities offer graduate programs
  - variable size, scope and delivery
- 3 categories
  - G-15: research intensive with bio-medical
  - Comprehensive: research intensive
  - Smaller: primarily undergraduate

# Public university model

- nearly all universities are public institutions
- education is a provincial jurisdiction (10 models)
- gov't operating grants = 66% of funding (2006)
- investment gap vs increasing enrolments
- tuition: 2011-12: nat'l avg all grad levels = \$5600/yr
- endowments

# Program choice and degree sequencing

- research Masters are stand alone degrees
- rarely direct PhD entry + fast track MA to PhD is uncommon in HUMA disciplines
- HUMA disciplines: common for students to do MA + PhD at different institutions

# Counting the Humanities (2008)

- HUMA\* degrees conferred
  - 3510 MAs + 549 PhDs
  - \*HUMA, Visual + performing arts, communications
- HUMA grads as % of grads all disciplines
  - 9.6% of total Masters
  - 10% of total PhDs
- avg PhD = 6-8 yrs for the +/-50% who complete

# Enrolment trends

- Registered in program (2008: FT only)
  - 5500 PhD enrolled; 8000 Masters
- 1992-2008
  - 40% growth in HUMA grad student population
- Visibility on campus
  - 2008: HUMA grads = 11%; ugrad = 35%
  - 1992: HUMA grads = 16% ugrad = 37% (1998)

# Challenges to making the case for HUMA: off campus

- Perception that HUMA is esoteric + self-indulgent
- Low public ROI
- labor market supply + demand
- Bad publicity from journalistic attacks
- Straying from core 'teaching' mission (code for ugrad)

# Challenges to making the case for HUMA: on campus

- humanities grads less visible on campus
- STEM attracts more revenue + greater prestige
- era of budget constraints + resource allocation
- unfavorable assessment metrics



# Challenges within HUMA community

- Allergy to, phobia of, contempt for 'indicators' as manifestation of University, Inc.
- Slow or resistant to aligning graduate studies and training with non-academic spheres of engagement or employment
- Slow to fashion compelling narrative by cf STEM
- Tendency to be defensive

# Understanding and Re-framing Public Discourse

- ‘Innovation’ mantra (R+D; S+T strategies; gov’t Ministries of innovation)
- But how do we understand true entrepreneurial innovation as a process or conceptual frame?
- People-centered innovation (patient-centered medicine; consumer-centered business)
- Where is the space for social innovation? creativity?

# Beyond knowledge + expertise: Value and Worth

- privilege (intrinsic + social) value over (monetized) worth (S. Lerer)
- foreground skills acquisition + training (developing 'Talent' SSHRC)
- new value proposition of HUMA graduate education

# STEM sells

- S&T leaders as compelling HUMA advocates: Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, Google (skills training)
- Genome Canada: link science of genomics to society, ethics, environment, economy, law, media
- NanoQC: role of SSH in knowledge translation
- embrace transdisciplinarity

# Partnerships, collaborations + community engagement

- *Cirque du soleil* + Hexagram (Concordia University)  
<http://hexagram.concordia.ca/>
- *Ubisoft*: games developer + Université de Montréal  
<http://www.ubi.com/ENCA/News/Info.aspx?nId=3430>
- *Center for Oral History + Digital Storytelling*,  
Concordia University  
<http://storytelling.concordia.ca/>



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