FORDHAM UNIVERSITY | Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Celebrating 100 Years

NEH next generation Humanities PhD
GRANT RECIPIENT
@neh.gov | #nextgenPhd | Humanities FIFTY YEARS

The "Living Humanities PhD" for the 21st Century

Eva Badowska, Ph.D., Dean
Melissa Labonte, Ph.D., Associate Dean

At a Glance

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10 Ph.D. programs (of which 5 in the humanities)

21 M.A. and M.S. programs

Fall 2017: 369 Ph.D. students/ 332 Master's students

Majority of Ph.D.'s fully funded for 3-6 years

Fordham/GSAS Context

- Humanities disciplines are traditional strengths of Jesuit universities in the US

- Majority of graduates find careers outside of academia

- Most stay local

- Fordham's mission as a Jesuit, Catholic university is to foster knowledge that makes a difference in the world: an apt context for a reform of doctoral education

GSAS PhDs at a Glance

25% awarded across five humanities disciplines

59% employed outside academia

75% reside in the NYC metropolitan area

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New Initiatives, 2014-

- **GSAS Futures**: Preparation for Compatible Careers

- **GSAS/GSA Interdisciplinary Lab**

- **GSAS Fellowships in Higher Education Leadership**

- **GSAS PFF** (Preparing Future Faculty)

"Go and set the world on fire."

-- Joseph M. McShane, S.J.,
President,
Fordham University

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Ongoing Fordham/GSAS Initiatives

THE PROBLEM
Steep Declines in Full Time Faculty Jobs in the Humanities

- Steep decline in academic job postings in the 6 major humanities disciplines from a peak in 2007-08: 30% down in most humanities disciplines, except in Classics, where the drop was 14% (*Humanities Indicators*)

30%
Decline in *most* humanities disciplines

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THE PROBLEM
PhD Programs Prepare Students for Jobs That Don't Exist

- "[T]housands of professors are currently in the business of preparing thousands of graduate students for jobs that don't exist." (Leonard Cassuto, *The Graduate School Mess: What Caused and How We Can Fix It* [2015])


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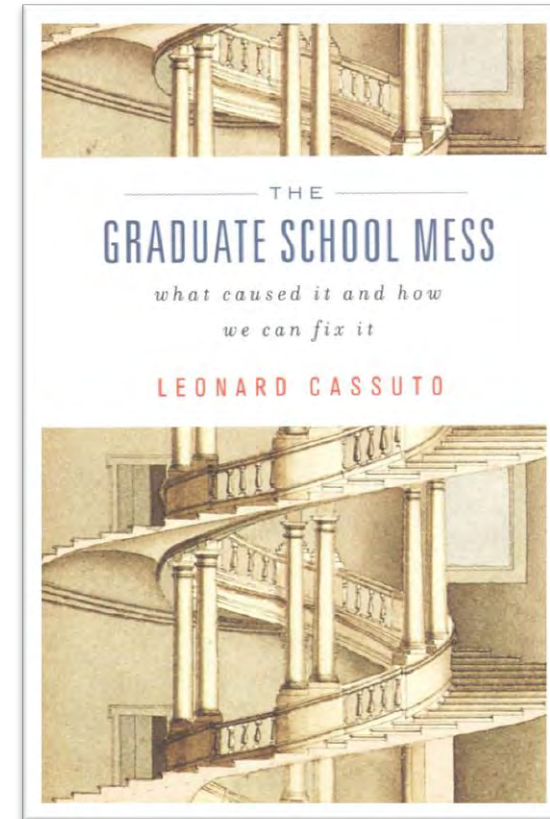
THE SOLUTION
Recognize that Times are "Good Enough"

Sidonie Smith, *Manifesto for the Humanities: Transforming Doctoral Education in Good Enough Times*

- "hold the vision of inclusive excellence in sight"
- "muster data for evidence-based counternarratives"
- "recognize the larger community of activists throughout the academy and the resources they mobilize for making change happen"
- "remember all the humanists and allies out there; and act to make doctoral education forward-looking for future humanists"

MANIFESTO FOR THE HUMANITIES

TRANSFORMING DOCTORAL EDUCATION IN GOOD ENOUGH TIMES

SIDONIE SMITH

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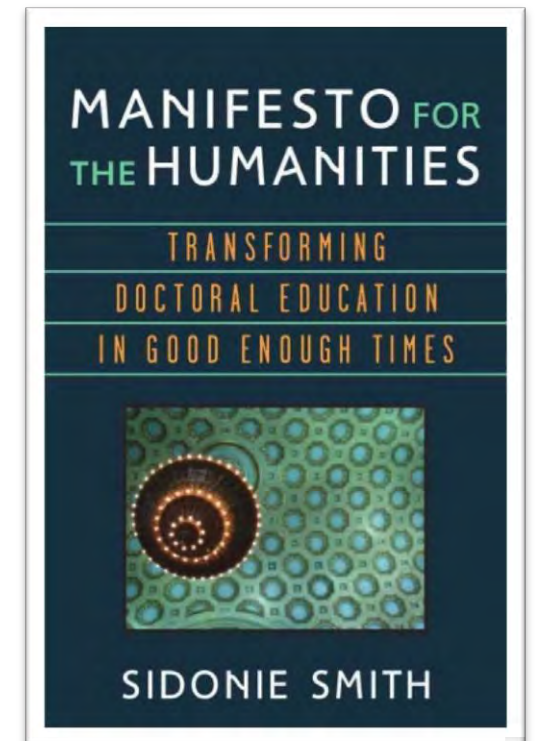
The "Living Humanities PhD" for the 21ˢᵗ Century Planning Themes

1. Revitalize and Rethink Learning Outcomes

2. Inhabit the New Learning Ecosystem

3. Mentor the Whole Person: Career-wise Counsel, Promising Partnerships

4. Incorporate Service and Community Engagement

5. Ensure Access and Inclusion

6. Cultivate and Curate a "Living Humanities" PhD Model

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Creating a Community of Change-Makers

Core Planning Group

- Two co-PI's (Dean and Department Chair)
- Faculty from across humanities disciplines
- Current doctoral candidates
- Recent humanities alumni working outside of academia

Constituent Advisory Group

- Representatives from MLA & AHA
- University Press director
- Director of International Initiatives
- Museum and Historical Society Curators
- Non-Profit Leaders in various areas
- Charter School Principal
- University Assessment Officer
- Director of Development
- Director of Service Learning
- CEO of a major health organization

Living Humanities at Fordham GSAS

"What We Talk About When We Talk About Mentoring" (*example of in-process outcome*)

- Steve D'Augustino, Director of Online Learning, summed up one of the strands of our November discussion in a blog post on a potential list of **mentoring components and associated outcomes**:
  - *Academic*
  - *Disciplinary*
  - *Social*
  - *Professional*
  - *Ethical*
  - *Cultural*

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Tensions & Issues to Address

- Janus-faced PhD model: In/Out, Academic/Non-Academic

- Student-focused/faculty-focused

- Academic rigor/expanding career focus

- Shorter time to degree/revitalized SLO's

- Incremental change/total overhaul

- Right Now/"Not Until" (. . . Elite schools lead the way, promotion criteria change, etc.)

Report from the Trenches: "LIVING" OUTCOMES

- **Model of incremental, diffuse, across-spectrum change**

  Movement across the spectrum simultaneously

  - ➢ Admission criteria and search committees
  - ➢ Coursework, comp exams, dissertations
  - ➢ Job ads and questions to job candidates
  - ➢ Criteria for evaluation, tenure, and promotion
  - ➢ Public advocacy and connecting with the "humanists out there"

- **Model of a broad community of change-making partners**

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Thank you!

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