

**From:** [Redeker, Jean Marie](#)  
**To:** [Reed, Kathy](#)  
**Cc:** [Bichelmeyer, Barbara Anne](#); [Roberts, Jennifer A](#); [Colombo, John](#); [Eggleston, Ben](#); [Versteeg, Margot AW](#); [Sever, Sean H](#); [Wilson, Aimee Armande](#); [Forth, Christopher E](#); [Mihsuah, Devon](#); [Janzen, Marike](#); [Urie, Dale Marie](#); [Giordano, Lara](#); [Livingston, Jacob](#); [Cotten-Spreckelmeyer, Antha](#)  
**Subject:** Request to Governance to Discontinuance the Humanities Program  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 11, 2021 12:15:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [HUM Discontinuation8.11.21.pdf](#)  
[Humanities program review.pdf](#)

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Kathy,

Attached is a request to discontinue the Humanities Program. The request includes a rationale for the recommendation, the projected impact on KU's mission, students, and faculty, and the latest program review.

Copied on this request are all faculty and staff in the program, the Provost/EVC, the VP for Academic Affairs & Graduate Studies, and the Interim Dean and the Associate Dean of CLAS.

The request meets the definition of an active academic program as outlined in USRR 8.1.1 and as such I understand will be considered by University Senate during the Fall 2021 semester.

Sincerely,

Jean M. Redeker, PhD | Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
ph. 785.864.1025 | email [jredeker@ku.edu](mailto:jredeker@ku.edu)  
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS | 1450 Jayhawk Blvd. | Lawrence, KS 66045  
[www.provost.ku.edu](http://www.provost.ku.edu)

## Recommendation for Discontinuance of Active Academic Programs

Name/Type of Program and Academic Plan Recommended for Discontinuance:

1. BA in Humanities (HUMA-BA)
2. Graduate Certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies (PCCNSTD-GC)
3. Undergraduate Certificate in World Literature (WRLDLTR-UC) – (no students since inception in Spring 2017)
4. Minor in Humanities (HWC)
5. Minor in Peace and Conflict Studies (PCCONFSTDS)  
*(Note: The minor in Peace and Conflict Studies is being considered for transferring to another unit, in which case discontinuance will not be necessary. But approval of the discontinuance is requested in case transferring it to another unit does not prove to be in the best interest of the university.)*

Department: Humanities

School/College: College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

CIP Code: 24.0103

Number of students currently enrolled (from Tableau Academic Plan & Subplan Counts – Spring 2021):

Program	Spring 2021
BA in Humanities	6
Minor in Humanities	0
Graduate Certificate in Peace & Conflict Studies	2
Undergraduate Certificate in World Literature	0

Number of students enrolled over the past five academic years (from OAC Academic Plan Counts):

Program	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
BA in Humanities (All Majors)	25	18	15	7	10
Minor in Humanities	4	0	2	1	1
Graduate Certificate in Peace & Conflict Studies	3	3	2	1	2
Undergraduate Certificate in World Literature	N/A	0	0	0	0

Number of program graduates over the past five years (from OAC Degrees Awarded):

Program	AY 2016	AY 2017	AY 2018	AY 2019	AY 2020
BA in Humanities	5	9	3	8	2
Minor in Humanities	1	0	2	1	0
Graduate Certificate in Peace & Conflict Studies	1	0	2	1	0
Undergraduate Certificate in World Literature	N/A	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Awards</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>

### Rationale for recommendation:

The biggest challenge the program experiences is prolonged, significant difficulty in attracting majors and minors. KBOR selected the undergraduate major for program review due to a failure to meet KBOR minima in the number of junior-senior majors (minimum = 25 per year) and degrees awarded (minimum = 10 per year).

The number of total majors has been falling significantly. Specifically, the program had 27 majors in Fall 2015 but only 10 majors in Fall 2020, a 63% decrease in a 5-year window. The minor in Humanities has always been low (i.e., 0-4 students enrolled). The graduate certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies had 5 majors in Fall 2015 which dropped to 2 majors in Fall 2020, a 60% decline. The undergraduate certificate in World Literature has been available since Spring 2017 but no students have ever enrolled in the program.

Degrees awarded shows a similar pattern. The number of undergraduate degrees earned was 8 for AY 2016 but fell to 2 for AY 2020, a 75% decline. Data for the minors is included to demonstrate the widespread difficulty in attracting students. Specifically, the number of minors earned in Humanities was 0-2 throughout the same period. Likewise, the number of graduate certificates earned was 0-2 throughout the same period. No student has ever completed the World Literature undergraduate certificate (available since Spring 2017).

As shown in the table below, the number of total majors has been falling since a high of 52 majors in 2000, indicating consistent declines in number of majors over a 20 year period. The department offers two service courses that regularly attract over 200 students per year (HUM 110, HUM 204) but this has not translated into a consistent pipeline of majors and minors. Despite strong effort and leadership and well-enrolled recruitment courses, the unit has not been able to stop or reverse long-standing declines in majors.

*Number of Humanities majors (from AIMS) from 2000 to 2019.*

HUMA-BA	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Trend
Total Majors	52	47	44	35	30	36	26	32	42	35	27	25	22	31	20	27	25	18	15	7	

Note that the faculty are a strength of the program. With numerous teaching awards among the faculty and consistently high teaching evaluations across the board, the faculty offer thoughtfully designed courses that explore multiple facets of the human experience, including cultural traditions, historical events, and pressing political problems. The tenured/tenure track faculty show high research productivity. Thus, although closure of these programs and the department is recommended, tenured/tenure-track faculty and teaching professors will be moved to new units to continue to contribute to the research and teaching mission of KU.

**Impact of discontinuance:**

On students: Current students will be able to complete their Humanities degrees, the Humanities minor, and the graduate certificate. It seems likely that all current students will graduate before the end of the period allowed in USRR VIII. In addition, the degrees make use of many cross-listed courses. Students should easily be able to take the HUM or PCS specific courses within the first year or two of closure and then complete remaining requirements through cross-listed courses. Future students will not be able to enroll in these programs.

On faculty: Six tenured/tenure-track faculty and one associate teaching professor will be moved to other units at KU. One lecturer position will be discontinued.

On staff: The associate specialist position and the half-time communication specialist position will be discontinued.

On mission: Although the interdisciplinary humanities training program will no longer continue, the College will maintain a diverse array of humanities disciplines (including majors, minors, certificates) to support student interest and demand.

Dean, School/College: \_\_\_\_\_ 

Date: August 9, 2021

Provost/EVC: \_\_\_\_\_ 

Date: August 11, 2021

**HUMANITIES PROGRAM REVIEW SUBMITTED TO THE KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS JANUARY 2021  
AS PART OF ITS REVIEW OF LOW ENROLLED PROGRAMS**

**Date Founded.** Established in 1947, the Humanities Degree Program is the oldest free-standing program in the United States. TKU's Humanities Program in its current iteration originated from a merger of the Western Civilization Reading Program, started in 1945, and the Humanities Program, established in 1947. The Western Civilization Program began in the aftermath of World War II as a response to the tumultuous events of the early twentieth century. Faculty from across the university designed and taught a common curriculum based on foundational works in the Western tradition to prepare students to become informed and engaged citizens. In 1997 the two programs merged.

**Program Support for University Mission.** The Humanities Program engages in interdisciplinary teaching and research about what it means to be human. Humanistic thinking is essential because it provides wisdom, perspective, and context for the human condition and draws from multiple disciplines in the pursuit of greater understanding, which is in keeping with KU's mission to lift students and society by educating the citizens of Kansas, the U.S. and beyond.

**Faculty profile:**

Number of faculty dedicated solely to the program:

- As of fall 2020, the faculty consists of seven tenured/tenure-track professors (Five faculty have 100% appointments in the Humanities; two have 0.50 FTE appointments in Humanities and 0.50 FTE in History and Spanish and Portuguese, respectively). The department is also supported by one non-tenure track teaching professor, two lecturers, and an associate director. Of note, 1 tenured faculty member and 1 lecturer will be retiring at the end of the year (Dec 2020), reducing the FTE of the department.

Number of faculty teaching core, elective, and general education courses:

- Given the small size of the faculty and program, faculty teach core, elective, and general education courses. The Humanities degree has two tracks. There are five required courses for the Global Humanities track and three required courses for the Peace and Conflict Studies track. A minimum of 21 hours of electives must be taken beyond the required courses for the Peace and Conflict Studies track while a minimum of 15 hours is required for the Global Humanities track. As befitting of an interdisciplinary degree, these electives are satisfied from a choice of Humanities courses and courses taught in other departments. There are 28 Humanities courses in the KU Core that fulfill general education requirements. The KU Core has six goals and KU undergraduate students must fulfill all six goals. Humanities offers courses to fulfill each of the goals.

**Program Productivity Beyond Number of Majors.** Beyond the undergraduate major, the Humanities Program offers two minors, an undergraduate certificate in World Literature, and a graduate certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies. The Program has increased its outreach activities to better connect with the local community and educates students from disciplines across campus. In 2014, the Program developed and taught HUM 175 Kansas Environment and Culture for KU's Academic Accelerator Program. This required significant time and effort on the part of HUM faculty and administrators with the expectation of sizable SCH for the Program along with the possibility of recruiting additional HUM majors. In addition, the Program actively embraced the KU Core as a curricular challenge and the Core now includes numerous Humanities courses that fulfill general education requirements. Several faculty members recently participated in a workshop to further implement career opportunities and experiential learning into the Program's curriculum, and the Program has begun offering affordable short study abroad experiences during summer and winter break.

The program faculty has an outstanding level of success in the area of awards; 70% of the department's faculty has received internal and external funding for research. Faculty have been awarded scholarly prizes

for their work. The publication productivity of the faculty is similarly impressive. Since 2010 faculty published 6 books, 1 creative work, 7 edited volumes, 22 articles in refereed journals, 29 book chapters, and 17 other published works (non-refereed articles, reviews, invited op-eds, etc.).

**Employment Demand.** The Humanities Program has designed its curriculum around the idea that students today need skills that allow them to be flexible in the workplace—from work in education to healthcare to service in the public and private sectors. Students not only acquire the competencies needed to succeed in multiple professions, they grapple with the humanistic values of equality, empathy, dignity, human well-being, and justice. Graduates of the Program have entered the fields of business and banking, law, teaching, writing and editorial work, and many have successfully completed graduate study in a variety of subject areas. *Degreestats* indicates 43% of graduates stay in the region, but does not report a median wage. *Payscale.com* lists median earnings for the degree as \$64,092.

**Cost Effectiveness and Program Strengths and Weaknesses.** The biggest challenge the program experiences is prolonged, significant difficulty in attracting majors and minors. The number of total majors (freshmen-senior) has been falling significantly. Specifically, the program had 27 majors in Fall 2015 but only 7 majors in Fall 2019, a 74% decrease in a 5-year window. The minor in Peace and Conflict Studies shows a similar trend (i.e., 60% drop) and the minor in Humanities has always been low. The pattern for overall SCH is similar with a 39% drop in credit hours over the same window, although the unit continues to produce a large number of credit hours for the size of its faculty, averaging more than 5,279 SCH annually for the most recent five year period. Popular general education courses that regularly enroll a large number of students include:

- Introduction to Humanities (HUM 110), which enrolled 285 students in AY 2020
- Western Civilization 1 (HUM 204), which enrolled 249 students in AY 2020
- Western Civilization 2 (HUM 205), which enrolled 118 students in AY 2020
- Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS 120), which enrolled 75 students in AY2020

The Program's strength is in its faculty. With numerous teaching awards among the faculty and consistently high teaching evaluations across the board, the faculty offer thoughtfully designed courses that explore multiple facets of the human experience, including cultural traditions, historical events, and pressing political problems. The small size of most of classes (usually under 25) means that faculty develop close bonds with students, foster a sense of community in the classroom, and support individualized learning. Faculty have deep connections with numerous units across KU, and several hold joint appointments in other departments. In its teaching and research, the program collaborates regularly with an even wider range of departments and schools at KU. These ties translate into recommendations and connections that enable students to take advantage of KU's vast resources. KU's size is one of its strengths, but it can be daunting to students who are new to the Jayhawk community.

The Program's impact on KU reaches beyond humanities departments and units; it has strong ties with social sciences and STEM departments. The Program has made significant efforts in the past three years to reach out to students in professional schools with relevant courses such as HUM 373 Aviation in American Culture, HUM 363 Perspectives on Science, Math and Engineering along with curriculum-specific sections of Western Civilization I and II for students in the School of Architecture. Many of Humanities courses are available in several formats, both in person and on-line. The Program was able to transition online in Spring 2020 with relative ease thanks to its small size and close-knit classroom communities. The shift was aided greatly by the fact that several faculty have deep knowledge of online and hybrid teaching methods. One of these experts is now a Faculty Consultant with the Center for Teaching Excellence charged with supporting instructors in humanities departments across campus.

**Recommendation and Justification:** KU recommends discontinuing the degree program and the academic

unit, pending the University's formal review process. Enrollment in the major is low and has been declining. However, the courses in the Humanities are highly valuable to KU and to its students as reflected in their contributions to general education with strong SCH production. Moving courses to other departments will preserve these contributions, however, it is possible at least 2.0FTE positions would not continue.