



Center for the Humanities
Box 1534 Station B
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee 37235
615/343-6060

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Photographs by Gary Gore and David Hildebrand.

“The beauty of the building, the peaceful environment, affected all of us, and helped create an atmosphere, even a mood, conducive to intellectual growth.”

— PAUL K. CONKIN
Distinguished Professor of History; Director, NEH Summer Seminar for College Teachers, held at the Center for the Humanities.

“This program has introduced many of us in the region to areas of learning we likely would not have encountered otherwise. The service Vanderbilt renders to regional schools is highly valuable and, personally speaking, much appreciated.”

— 1987 Mellon Seminar participant

“The Vanderbilt Center for the Humanities is the best program I have seen which allows people with wide-ranging interests to engage in mutually-beneficial research.”

— JEAN ELSHTAIN
Centennial Professor of Political Science; Fellow of the Center, 1988-89.

CENTER FOR THE
HUMANITIES
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



Fellowship Program

One of the central programs of the Center is its Fellowship Program. Each year the advisory committee of the Center receives proposals from Vanderbilt faculty members. Eight Fellows are selected for the following academic year. These Fellows are involved in projects focused on a common question or theme of fundamental importance. They meet regularly and give presentations in seminars, develop common areas of investigation, plan special programs, and work together in other supportive ways.

Each Fellow occupies a quiet study at the Humanities Center. This arrangement allows informal conversation to take place among the Fellows, an important supplement to the more formal exchanges which occur in the seminar meetings.

The Center also assists in the coordination of the Fellowship Program and other Center seminars by working with departments of the College of Arts and Science to bring noted scholars to Vanderbilt as visiting faculty or invited lecturers. These scholars enhance the Center's programs as well as the Fellows' projects.

The Center's Fellowship Program is designed to encourage individual or joint publications, new graduate and undergraduate courses, scholarly conferences, regional faculty development seminars, and graduate and undergraduate seminars. Since Fellows are members of the Vanderbilt faculty, the intellectual bonds formed during their appointments to the Center should have a significant influence on the study and teaching of the humanities in the College for many years to come.

The Vanderbilt Center for the Humanities is located in the Vaughn Home, which was constructed before Vanderbilt University opened for classes in October, 1875. In 1987, the house was restored through the generous gifts of Houghton D. Vaughn and William S. Vaughn, who are the grandsons of Dr. and Mrs. William J. Vaughn, the first residents of the house.



In an age of increasingly specialized intellectual endeavor, the Vanderbilt Center for the Humanities is committed to the belief that cooperative research and study in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences is crucial to the modern university and the society which it influences. By bringing together faculty members drawn from a variety of disciplines, the Center creates an environment that encourages intellectual

exchange, and deepens and broadens research and teaching in the humanities at Vanderbilt and in the region.

The Vanderbilt Center for the Humanities began its programs in January, 1988 under the aegis of the College of Arts and Science. The Center is designed to intensify and increase discussion of academic, social, and cultural issues among specialists and scholars in related fields. The Center offers a variety of programs in order to achieve its goals.

"I am proud to say that Vanderbilt is among a handful of private research universities that have established centers for the humanities.

When members of our faculty can engage in an exciting exchange of ideas, our students benefit significantly from their professors' new insights, enthusiasm and renewed vigor for teaching in an interdisciplinary context."

—CHANCELLOR JOE B. WYATT

Faculty Seminars

In addition to the Fellowship Program, the Center sponsors a variety of seminars which involve other members of the faculty (as well as Fellows). One type of seminar consists of eight to ten scholars who meet weekly to pursue a common interest or theme. Another type consists of more broadly-conceived topics aimed at the nonspecialist, such as "Current Trends in Nuclear Physics" or discussions regarding environmental ethics. A third type of seminar focuses on a specific paper, book, or the results of a research produced by a Vanderbilt faculty member.

In its brief history, the Center has sponsored seminars on a variety of topics, including several issues in comparative literature, theories of interpretation of both ancient and modern texts, intellectual and social life at the University, and Alan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind*.

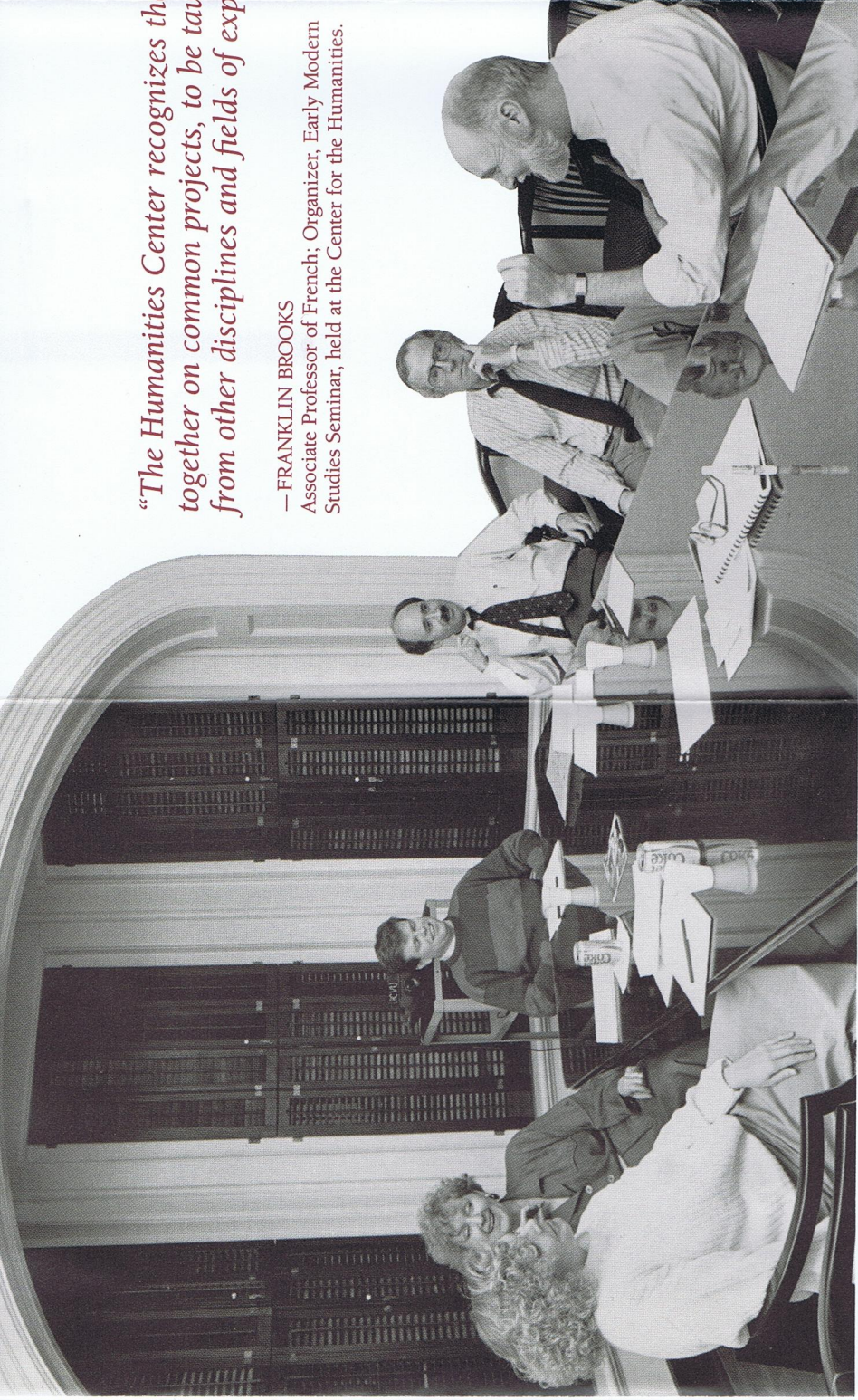
Regional Seminars

From 1980 to 1988, Vanderbilt University, through a generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, sponsored over thirty seminars for faculty members in regional colleges and universities. The Center plans to continue these successful programs and administered its first



“The Humanities Center recognizes the need scholars have for time to work together on common projects, to be taught as well as to teach, and to learn from other disciplines and fields of expertise.”

—FRANKLIN BROOKS
Associate Professor of French; Organizer, Early Modern Studies Seminar, held at the Center for the Humanities.



regional seminar in May of 1988. These programs show the value of concentrated interdisciplinary work by faculty in the region and the Center intends to continue to offer such programs for regional faculty members.

As the only private research university in the central south, Vanderbilt hopes that its Center for the Humanities will serve as a magnet for scholars working in the region. Regional faculty seminars will allow scholars in the area to develop background and expertise for new course offerings, to increase knowledge of topics that they had already researched, to fill in gaps of knowledge, and to open new areas of interest.

A variety of other summer programs are hosted by the Center, including seminars in the humanities for secondary school teachers and summer seminars for college faculty members.

Center Staff

Charles E. Scott
Director
Mona Frederick
Program Coordinator

Advisory Committee Members

Barbara C. Bowen
Professor of French and Chair, French and Italian
Paul K. Conkin
Distinguished Professor of History
Ann Jemmalie Cook
Associate Professor of English
George J. Graham, Jr.
Professor and Chair, Political Science
C. Enrique Pupo-Walker
Centennial Professor of Spanish
William H. Race
Professor of Classical Studies
Charles E. Scott
Professor and Chair, Philosophy
Ex Officio Members
Jacque Voegeli
Dean, College of Arts and Science
Russell G. Hamilton
Dean, Graduate Studies and Research