**What is a confounding problem?**

Confounding (or wicked) problems are large-scale problems that resist any simple solution – and that concern us as citizens as well as scholars. The expression has been used primarily in the sciences and social sciences to describe problems or issues that have multiple causes and no single answers, such as a quick technological fix or a central authority to solve them. Indeed, such an answer might further complicate the original problem.

Of course, in the arts and humanities, we are familiar with dealing with complexity and context, but it seems we are rarely given a place in the conversation about such issues. This grant is designed to make such a place, in our teaching and our research, for faculty and students alike. We want to be able to understand and respond to these issues *as* artists and humanists, bringing to bear both the experience and creativity of our disciplinary traditions.

What are some examples of confounding problems? They need not be contemporary, they need not be political, but nearly anything you might read in the newspaper. They might have a local or regional expression, but they certainly need not be "American."

race, identity, and security

statuary, historical justice, and public memory

the cultivation of empathy

diversity on campus

migration and borders

sea-level rise and climate adaptation

gentrification and urban renewal

the state of the arts in higher education

**What can these courses look like?**

Institutions of higher education are notorious for the glacial speed of curricular change. This grant will give us the space and resources to respond nimbly and creatively to issues that matter, but that might not fit neatly into existing curricula.

- "teach-in" courses: ¼ credit (10.5 contact hours) or ½ credit (21 contact hours) courses.
  e.g. ¼ credit
    3 days x 4 hours (Thanksgiving/January/Spring Break)
    6 afternoons x 2 hours
  e.g. ½ credit
    7 afternoons x 3 hours
    weekly x 1 ½ hour

            Plus: assigned seminar reading, archival research, responsive writing

  "Teach-ins" may be team-taught, as long as at least one member of the team is part of the Arts & Humanities division.

- follow-up "teach-out" grants for faculty who have taught a "teach-in" course and/or students who have completed one; to fund continued engagement with the problem under study (e.g. public presentation, community partner project, digital exhibit, field trip).

- new courses on confounding problems: Foundation Seminars, IPs, seminars.