2013 Graduate Education in the Humanities: Preparing for a Meaningful Future

AS THE 2012-13 MSU ACADEMIC YEAR and the College of Arts & Letters’ 50th year drew to a close, the College presented a discussion with leading experts from across the United States in the field of Graduate Education in the Humanities. Held April 24, 2013, at the James B. Henry Center for Executive Development as well as on the MSU campus, the conversation-based event saw administrative thought leaders and faculty share and discuss best practices and recent innovations on their campuses and in their professional organizations.

EVENT GOALS
Benefits of the event included:

- Bringing focus to a national debate that is currently at “center stage” when discussing graduate education in the humanities
- Sharing of best practices and innovations, and how to reform current structures to engage more students to pursue graduate education in the humanities
- Identifying skills required by employers that make a graduate student desirable to hire
- Discussion on what advocacy efforts are needed by universities and professional organizations to prepare students for transferable skills after graduation
- Visibility and exposure for MSU by hosting some of the most respected thought leaders and decision makers in the country
- Visibility for and a tour of MSU’s first-in-class Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum

Michigan State University was well represented at the event, with guest lectures by Dean Karin A. Wurst, College of Arts and Letters, and Professor Karen L. Klomparens, associate provost for graduate education and dean of the graduate school. Each distinguished speaker was given 10-15 minutes to lecture on specific topics as it relates to graduate education in the humanities. The order and topics of speakers were:

Dwight A. McBride, Northwestern University, Dean of the Graduate School
“Beyond the (Problematic) RI Target: Graduate Education for a Range of Institutions”

Robert C. Holub, The Ohio State University
“Living in the Past, Preparing for the Future”

Russell A. Berman, Stanford University
“Reforming the German Studies Ph.D.”

Karen L. Klomparens, Michigan State University
“Transferable Skills for Multiple Career Options”

Karin A. Wurst, Michigan State University
“Teaching, Learning, and Technology”

John A. Stevenson, University of Colorado
“How Much Time Does a Ph.D. Need?”

Rosemary G. Feal, Modern Language Association
“What Happens in Grad School Shouldn’t Stay in Grad School: Thoughts on Necessary Cultural Change”

Geoffrey Galt Harpham, National Humanities Center
“Going on the Offensive: Advocating for the Humanities”

A private reception and tour of MSU’s new Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum followed the day-one talk and discussion session, and a number of attendees also met the next morning over breakfast for additional discussion on the humanities.

To learn more about the “Graduation in the Humanities: Preparing for a Meaningful Future” event, see: www.cal.msu.edu/humanitiesevent

To learn more about Dean Karin A. Wurst’s article in Inside Higher Ed, “Beyond Handwringing and Good Intentions,” see: http://go.cal.msu.edu/IHEKaw