In his book *Why Teach?* Mark Edmundson contrasts two ideals of higher education, which he calls the “corporate city” and the “scholarly enclave.” The corporate city places emphasis on entrepreneurship, career preparation, leadership, and partnering with business. By contrast, the scholarly enclave offers “an education in which the student follows the Platonic injunction to ‘Know Thyself’ and also seeks to know the world.”

This idea helps me to make sense of the experience of belonging to Humanities and Cultural Studies at USF: we are a scholarly enclave in the midst of a corporate city. Although this can sometimes feel like swimming against the tide, I am happy to be able to report our continuing success in fulfilling this mission.

I hope that many of you will join us for the annual potluck Spring picnic at USF Riverfront Park on Saturday, April 26th. We will be honoring several of our current students, including the winners of the Robertson-Harkness Memorial Scholarships in American Studies, the Legacy Scholarship in Humanities, and the Nikolaos Mandelos Memorial Scholarship in Humanities.

“The elevator to success is out of order. You’ll have to use the stairs… one step at a time.”

- Joe Girard, author and motivational speaker
Dr. Christie Rinck, academic advisor, college of Arts and Sciences, was selected as an Outstanding Advising Certificate of Merit recipient for academic advising from the National Academic Advising Association for 2013.

The award is presented to individuals who have demonstrated qualities associated with outstanding academic advising of students.

Since 1983, NACADA has honored individuals and institutions making significant contributions to the improvement of academic advising. The goal of NACADA is to promote quality academic advising and professional development of its membership to enhance the educational development of students.

NACADA’s membership has grown to over 10,000 faculty, professional advisors, administrators, counselors and others in academic and student affairs, concerned with the intellectual, personal and vocational needs of students. In addition, NACADA is the representative and advocate of academic advising and those providing that service to higher education.

Dr. Rinck was honored and presented this award in Salt Lake City, UT during the annual NACADA conference in October.
CONGRATULATIONS

HCS SPRING INTERNS AWARDED WITH USF COMMUNITY SCHOLARS FELLOWSHIP

Three of our spring interns, Lyndsay DeCecco, Erika Kozak and Michi Wischnewski have won the prestigious USF Community Scholars Fellowship. The winners, along with their titles of research projects are: Lyndsay DeCecco, “Youth Outreach Development: Raising Awareness About Sulphur Springs”; Erika Kozak, “Holocaust Survivor Testimonies: An Online Repository”; and Michi Wischnewski, “Sweetwater Organic Community Farm: An Oral History.”

The Fellowship supports undergraduate students conducting research carried out in partnership with community organizations. Each Fellowship recipient is expected to spend at least 150 hours during the term conducting the research under the guidance Dr. Christie Rinck. The winners received $750 as a stipend and can receive an additional $250 to help defray research costs. The community partners will receive a $250 stipend, and all partners have already submitted a letter of support for the research. As their faculty mentor, Dr. Rinck also receives $250 (per student) as an honorarium to oversee the research, funding which she has graciously elected to have transferred to our new HCS Internship Fund. All Fellowship winners are expected to present their research at the Undergraduate Research Colloquium in the spring.
Faculty Spotlight

Dr. William Cummings has been with the Humanities and Cultural Studies department since 2012. After earning his undergraduate degree from Trinity College, Dr. Cummings pursued an interdisciplinary MA in Southeast Asian Studies at Ohio University, where he began to study Indonesian history, language, politics, and culture. He then went on to earn his PhD in History at the University of Hawai’i at Manoa. Currently, he serves as a graduate advisor and is a full professor teaching courses on Japanese Film & Culture, Western perceptions of Asia, Asian history on film, and the Vietnam War.

He says that his area of interest has always been perceptions of the past – the different ways in which humans tell or write narratives about the past. He is especially interested in cross-cultural approaches to the past and the ways in which one genre or another shapes the kind of stories we tell about the past. He has written three books to date: *The Makassar Annals* (2011); *A chain of kings: The Makassarese chronicles of Gowa and Talloq* (2007); *Making Blood White: Historical Transformations in Early Modern Makassar* (2002) for which he won the Harry J. Benda Prize from the Association for Asian Studies and the Best First Book Award from Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society in 2004. He is currently writing a book that explores the Vietnam War through film. In 2005, he was awarded the “Outstanding Faculty Research Achievement Award” from USF.

His reviews on RateMyProfessor, an online review site where students provide feedback on teachers and courses that they have taken, are top notch. While it can certainly be argued that this site doesn’t provide the best measure of a teacher’s worth and pedagogical practice, it is still the method students prefer to use when leaving feedback and learning about potential teachers and courses that they are interested in. Dr. Cummings regularly receives rave reviews from his students such as: “Expect to work hard. Very rewarding though,” “Exciting examples that made the class think…Lectures were engaging. One of the best profs. ever,” and “He has a passion for his subject, which is very good for a professor.” Reading the reviews, it is clear that his students appreciate his approachable style and the passion he lends to the material, a passion he developed early on as an undergraduate student. When asked about why he chose a career in academia, he responded: “I had a great professor as an undergrad – Norman Parmer – who captivated me with his stories about Southeast Asian history and culture. He wore these colorful batik shirts and gave me a sense of how fundamentally different Southeast Asian culture was from my own upbringing and assumptions. I was hooked!” Dr. Cummings inspires his students in the same way that he was inspired by his instructor in undergraduate school.

When you meet Dr. Cummings in the department hallway, he always greets you with a kind remark and a smile. He’s a pleasure to work with and a true asset to the department, yet he credits HCS as a department for making his job meaningful. He says that it is the “friendly, collegial, and supportive people” that make working with HCS at USF most enjoyable. “I feel like I have found the perfect academic home that allows me to write and teach students how to perform sophisticated analyses of Asian cultural texts in their social and historical contexts. These skills are at the heart of a Humanities education and help us all lead rich, fulfilling, and meaningful lives.”

When Dr. Cummings isn’t working he enjoys spending time with his wife Sharon, an accomplished artist, and their three dogs.
The mission of the Humanities & Cultural Studies department is to foster an interdisciplinary understanding of how the arts contribute to the cultural construction of social realities:
(1) to educate students in the social and aesthetic values embodied in visual, literary, musical, and other texts of the world’s civilizations, from the archaic to the present era, using an interdisciplinary approach; (2) to teach students the methods and sources for conducting research in humanities and cultural studies, and to give them applied practice in doing and presenting such research; and (3) to train students in the skills of critical thinking and written communication that are central to a liberal arts education.
Save the Date!

Humanities and Cultural Studies Department Potluck Picnic

SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH 2014

4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Awards Ceremony at 5:00.

USF RIVERFRONT PARK PAVILION

RSVP: Email Edgardo Valentin at EValenti@usf.edu