THE HUMANITIES INSTITUTE ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM:

The Resilient Humanities PhD: Scholarly Formation for the 21st Century

Humanities Institute

The University of Texas at Austin

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Graduate Office of Career and Life Design
Career Success

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SCHEDULE

Lunch 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Welcome 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

Featured Panel Discussion 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Collaborative Design Session 2:45 PM - 4:30 PM

Reception 4:30 - 6:00 PM

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Featured Panel Discussion

PANELISTS:



Dr. Robert Townsend

Director, Humanities, Arts, and Culture Programs, American Academy of Arts & Sciences



Dr. James Van Wyck

Assistant Dean for Professional Development, Princeton University



Dr. Daina Berry

Michael Douglas Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts and Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara



Dr. Katina Rogers

Author of *Putting the Humanities PhD to Work* (Duke University 2020) & Founder of InkCap Consulting

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PhD Conditions, Mindsets & Implications

Annie Maxfield, M.S.
Director, The Graduate Office of Career and Life Design

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How does doctoral training shape attitudes and behaviors towards career decision making?

Doctoral training is…

designed as a rigorous, multi-year **apprenticeship** focused on cultivating advanced research skills, **deep subject knowledge**, and **independent thinking**. Its core goals are to develop **ethical, critical thinkers** who can engage in **scholarly debate** to produce **original contributions to knowledge**.

1

MINDSET 1 OF 5

Critical Bias

Training condition: rigor & contributions to new knowledge

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IMPLICATIONS FOR
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Critical Bias

PhDs may…

- Question assumptions, methods and expertise, especially outside of the academy
- Be skeptical of the sources of assessments, research or data
- Get analysis paralysis
- Not be able to make decisions or act

2

MINDSET 2 OF 5

External Locus of Control

Training condition: apprenticeship

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IMPLICATIONS FOR
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

External Locus of Control

PhDs may…

- Hyper-focus on their advisor's expectations
- Feel uncertainty about completion timeline
- Normalize ambiguous expectations
- Fear asking questions or sharing real needs
- Feel disempowered generally
- Have an eroded sense of independence

3

MINDSET 3 OF 5

Expertise = Identity

Training condition: deep subject matter expertise

IMPLICATIONS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Expertise = Identity

PhDs may…

- Overidentify with their discipline, or subfield
- Experience significant identity loss and transformation when exploring careers
- Be unable to understand or articulate their own strengths or skill set
- Report lower intellectual self-confidence the longer they are in their program
- Be unable to imagine or translate their work due to hyper-specialization

4

MINDSET 4 OF 5

Orientation Toward Prestige

Training condition: scholarly recognition & debate

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IMPLICATIONS FOR
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Orientation Toward Prestige

PhDs may…

- Be more motivated by recognition, publication, independence & contribution
- Ignore their own individual values and needs in exchange for academically valued pursuits
- Assume work in other industries is less intellectually challenging, respected or rigorous
- Undervalue teaching and service activities
- Overemphasize the importance of credentials and education

5

MINDSET 5 OF 5

Perfectionism + Certainty

Training condition: ethical, independent thinking

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IMPLICATIONS FOR
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Perfectionism + Certainty

PhDs may…

- Hyper-focus on application materials and precise written communication
- Delay taking action and miss opportunities
- Avoid applying to things they don't 100% understand or know (risk-avoidance)
- Undermine their own expertise and confidence by hedging their claims

5 PhD Mindsets

1. Critical Bias
2. External Locus of Control
3. Expertise = Identity
4. Orientation Toward Prestige
5. Perfectionism + Certainty

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Collaborative Design Sessions

SESSION FACILITATORS:



Dr. Casey Boyle
Associate Professor of Rhetoric & Writing



Dr. Julie Schell
Assistant Vice Provost of Academic Technology



Dr. Nathan Langfitt
Senior Director of Career Success



Annie Maxfield, M.S.
Director, The Graduate Office of Career and Life Design

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