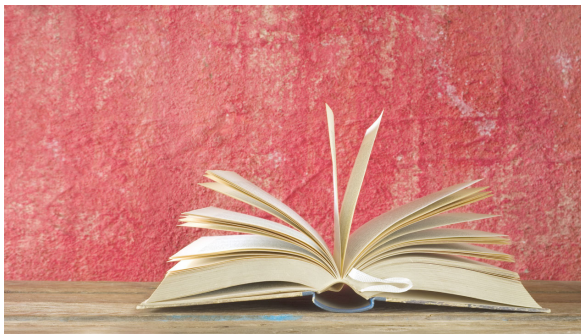


New Oakland University Center for Public Humanities the first in Michigan

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Oakland University and the College of Arts and Sciences are proud to announce the fall 2019 founding of a new Center for Public Humanities. It is considered the first humanities center in the state of Michigan focused exclusively on the public humanities.



Public humanities represent a cutting-edge approach to arts and humanities research, holding that public intellectuals must offer humanistic scholarship and creative work in accessible formats for the benefit and enrichment of the region's populace. With this new center, Oakland University joins a handful of leading universities dedicated to raising the profile of artistic and humanistic research through prominent humanities centers.

The Center's mission is to advance excellence in public humanities and the arts to support and enrich Southeast Michigan's diverse learning communities. While it will not have a brick-and-mortar facility, the Center will instead work "nomadically," bringing engaging programming to diverse communities in their preferred gathering spaces. This model aims to reduce access barriers that might prevent students and the general public from engaging with the arts and humanities.

This fall, Co-Directors Andrea Knutson and John Corso Esquivel will begin to solicit nominations for a Community Advisory Board and Student Advisory Committee to shape the Center's vision. The Board will solicit requests for programming directly from community leaders and Oakland students. Listening to their feedback will enable the Center to consolidate project requests and address crucial debates within the humanities and the arts today.

Toni Morrison film screening October 17

In October, the Center will launch its first event to coincide with National Arts and Humanities Month. A screening of the 2019 acclaimed documentary, *Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am*, will set the tone as the Center pays homage to the Nobel laureate writer and tireless advocate of the humanities. The event, presented in collaboration with OU's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, will take place at noon on Thursday, October 17, in the Oakland Center Habitat. It is free and open to the public. Seating is limited.

Dr. John Corso Esquivel, associate professor of Art History, and Dr. Andrea Knutson, associate professor of English, co-founded the Center under the auspices of the College of Arts and Sciences after a year of preparation. Many professors, administrators, students, staff and community members contributed to their efforts. The center is now in its early fundraising stages and will announce its first full year of programming later this fall.

For more information on the Center for Public Humanities, email humanities@oakland.edu.