



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Humanities Initiatives at Historically Black Colleges and Universities application guidelines at

<http://www.neh.gov/grants/education/humanities-initiatives-historically-black-colleges-and-universities>

for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Education Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: A Critical Reappraisal of Booker T. Washington: A Tuskegee Humanities Initiative

Institution: Tuskegee University

Project Director: Loretta S. Burns

Grant Program: Humanities Initiatives at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

A Critical Reappraisal of Booker T. Washington: A Tuskegee Humanities Initiative

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A Critical Reappraisal of Booker T. Washington: A Tuskegee Humanities Initiative

Summary

The proposed project will engage the humanities in a critical re-examination of Booker T. Washington, one of the founders of Tuskegee University and one of the twentieth century's most influential and controversial black leaders. Although Washington has been the subject of a number of scholarly investigations, the full scope of his ideas, activities, and influence has not been sufficiently researched or adequately articulated. Accordingly, this two-year project, which intersects with the one hundredth anniversary of his death (2015), will employ the tools and perspectives of literary criticism and historical analysis to explore a variety of primary and secondary texts with a view to illuminating neglected dimensions of Washington's life and work and contributing to a deeper understanding of his complex legacy.

The project will focus on Washington's regional, national, and global influence in four areas: education, politics and civil rights, business, and literature and the arts. It will include the following activities: (1) faculty-student research collaborations; (2) curriculum enhancement; (3) digital resource development; (4) a public symposium; and (5) initiation of an ongoing humanities institute.

Although Washington is typically associated with industrial education and political conservatism, faculty-student research will focus on certain of his ideas, achievements, and associations that have been seldom noted or inadequately understood—for example, the correspondence between Washington's educational and political philosophies and those of W.E.B. Du Bois, one of Washington's sharpest critics; Washington's influence on the social, intellectual, literary, and religious life of Tuskegee; the influence of Tuskegee and the publication of translations of *Up from Slavery*—Washington's autobiography—on education and liberation struggles in Africa. These and other investigations along with the other grant activities have the potential to expand and reshape our view of Washington and his life's work. Focused research projects will produce publishable papers and will assist in enriching selected core courses in American and African literature and history and developing a new interdisciplinary, team-taught course that will explore Washington's historical significance and other special topics in the humanities.

A major component of the project is the processing and digitizing of previously unavailable materials from three large collections housed in the Tuskegee University Archives: the Booker T. Washington papers, which are not included in the Library of Congress's Washington/Tuskegee collection; the National Negro Business League papers; and the National Negro Health Week papers. These collections contain valuable, unexplored information on Washington and two significant and far-reaching initiatives that he inaugurated.

Toward the end of the grant period, an on-campus public symposium will be convened to provide an opportunity for visiting scholars, grant participants, other members of the campus community, and members of the public to participate in rigorous analysis and discussion of Washington's position in American and African American history. Finally, all grant activities will form the first phase of an ongoing humanities institute that will develop public humanities programs and activities, particularly those that incorporate aspects of the university's history and emphasize the relationship of the humanities to other disciplines.

Intellectual Rationale

The proposed project seeks to advance humanities education and scholarship at Tuskegee University by undertaking a critical re-examination of Booker T. Washington, one of the university's founders and its first president—and arguably one of the most complex and controversial figures of the twentieth century. Employing the techniques and practices of historical and literary analysis and utilizing a range of primary and secondary sources, the project has the potential to shed new light on Washington's regional, national, and global influence in education, politics and civil rights, business, and literature and the arts. Through research, curriculum and program enhancement, digital resource development, and symposia, Tuskegee faculty and students will collaborate in an effort to analyze and reinterpret Washington's life and work and to better comprehend his place in American history.

This proposed reassessment of Washington comes at an especially appropriate time, as the year 2015 will mark the one hundredth anniversary of his death. Although substantial scholarship already exists (see Appendix B), additional studies are needed to fully comprehend his complicated legacy. Despite his name recognition and his iconic status as one of black America's most prominent twentieth-century educators and leaders, he remains an enigma, and his multi-layered agenda, his diverse interests, and his wide-ranging influence are still not clearly understood. And beyond the publication of *Up from Slavery*, his autobiography, his engagement with the humanities is little known and seldom acknowledged.

Booker T. Washington was born a slave in Franklin County, Virginia, in 1856. His mother, Jane, was a cook for a small farmer, and his father was a white man whom he never knew. When the Civil War ended, Washington worked in the salt and coal mines of

Malden, West Virginia, and struggled to attend school. Firmly resolved to obtain an education, in 1872 he left Malden for Hampton, Virginia, walking most of the 500 miles, and gained admission to Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. After graduating from Hampton, he taught school in West Virginia and later returned to Hampton as a member of the faculty.

In 1881 Washington was appointed the first principal of the Tuskegee Normal School, which had been established by a bill passed by the Alabama State Legislature, and the school opened inauspiciously in a shanty on July 4; however, in an amazingly short period, Tuskegee Normal School grew from a one-room cabin to one of the most well-known and respected institutions in the country, and Booker T. Washington emerged as the country's most influential black leader.

Washington's famous Atlanta Exposition Address, delivered in 1895, put him on the national stage and solidified his position as a spokesman for black America. However, his apparent emphasis on industrial training and economic opportunities for blacks and his encouragement of cooperation between the races led some observers—most notably W.E.B. Du Bois—to accuse Washington of asking blacks to surrender their political and civil rights and their desire for higher learning. From 1895 to the present, Washington's perceived ideas and agendas, his writing and speeches, his actions and their consequences have been subjects of investigation by serious scholars of history, literature, and other fields of study. Yet as we approach the one hundredth anniversary of his death, the nature and scope of his mission, methods, capacities, and influence have not been fully researched or clearly articulated.

The proposed project does not have as its goal the advancement of a particular viewpoint; rather, it will examine multiple primary and secondary texts through the lenses of history and

literary criticism to reassess Washington's life and work with a view to illuminating dimensions of his influence that have not been adequately explored. Its intended audience includes (1) the faculty and students of Tuskegee University, many of whom have read *Up from Slavery* but are unaware of the work's complexity or of the ironies and paradoxes embedded in Washington's words and ideas, and (2) other scholars and members of the public interested in exploring Washington's multifaceted imprint on the South, the nation, and the world.

The project will improve teaching and learning in the humanities at Tuskegee University by providing opportunities for faculty and students in literature and history to collaborate on potentially groundbreaking research and contribute new knowledge to humanities scholarship. It will develop teaching modules to enrich existing courses in composition, literature, and history that are part of the Core Curriculum, and it will also develop an interdisciplinary, team-taught course that will explore special topics in the humanities.

A major component of the grant project is the development of a new section of the Tuskegee University Archives Repository Web site, which will include scholarly papers developed during the grant and teaching and research resources in the form of previously unavailable primary sources from collections housed in the Archives. The project will also advance teaching and learning in the humanities by sponsoring a public symposium on Washington and initiating the first phase of a humanities institute.

Content and Design

The two-year project will include the following activities: (1) developing faculty-student research collaborations intended to produce scholarly papers; (2) enriching existing English and history courses and developing a new humanities course; (3) creating a new section of the

Tuskegee University Archives Repository Web site; (4) organizing a symposium; and (5) initiating a humanities institute.

Ten faculty members from the Departments of English and History (see Appendices E and I) will develop research projects related to Washington's influence in (1) education, (2) politics and civil rights, (3) business, and (4) literature and the arts. Each faculty member will involve one or more students in his or her research, and before the projects commence, faculty and students will attend research workshops conducted by the university archivist and a consultant. The research projects, which investigate new or underexplored dimensions of Washington's legacy, are summarized below.

Dr. Lisa Bratton will examine the often-overlooked economic and political impact of the National Negro Business League, an organization that Washington founded and one that predated the U.S. Chamber of Commerce by twelve years. Dr. Xavier Nicholas will revisit the Washington-Du Bois debate in an attempt to illuminate surprising similarities between the educational and political philosophies of the two leaders.

Dr. Caroline Gebhard will research Washington's impact on the literary, intellectual, and social culture of Tuskegee, focusing on the Tuskegee Women's Club, which was led by Washington's third wife, Margaret Murray Washington, a prominent figure in the black women's club movement. Dr. Benjamin Fishkin will probe Washington's influence on the religious life of Tuskegee, including the Phelps Bible School, and examine the impact of religion on the school's educational philosophy. And Dr. Zanice Bond will reconsider Washington's role in advancing educational opportunities for Native Americans in an investigation of black American and Native American intersections in American literature and culture.

Dr. Loretta Burns will examine *Up from Slavery* in the contexts of the African American written *and* vernacular traditions, with particular focus on the work's relationship to the blues and its impulse to transcend and transform experience through memory and language;

Dr. Lisa Hill will also draw on elements of the vernacular tradition, specifically the trickster figure, to analyze Washington's identity and his rise to power. Dr. Rhonda Collier will contrast Washington's childhood home, a log cabin, with the Oaks, Washington's final home, exploring how the architecture and landscape of the Oaks reflect Washington's ascendancy.

In an effort to reappraise Washington's global influence, Dr. Adaku Ankumah will examine his impact on education in Africa, specifically in Togo and South Africa. Dr. William Ndi will also concentrate on Washington's influence in Africa, examining how the creation of Tuskegee and in particular the publication of *Up from Slavery*, in translation, helped inspire liberation movements in that region.

In addition to producing publishable papers, research projects will assist in developing teaching and learning modules to enrich the following humanities courses: (1) English 201, Advanced Composition; (2) English 208, American Literature II; (3) English 330/331, Black American Literature I and II; (4) English 335, Literature of the South; (5) English 421/422, Directed Research and Writing I and II; and (6) History 316, African American History to 1877. The project will also design an interdisciplinary, team-taught course, Humanities 200, which will explore Washington's life and work and other special topics in the humanities.

All faculty and student participants will read a core list of scholarly works on Washington as a foundation for their focused projects (see Appendix A).

A key component of the grant project is the creation of an additional section of the Tuskegee University Archives Repository Web site (www.tuskegee.edu/ArchivesRepository). This section will include research completed during the grant period and selected materials from the following valuable collections: the Booker T. Washington papers, the National Negro Business League papers, and the National Negro Health Week papers.

The Booker T. Washington papers are not included in the Library of Congress's Booker T. Washington/Tuskegee Institute Collection and are virtually unexplored. The National Negro Business League papers and the National Negro Health Week papers document significant movements that Washington inaugurated and have also received little scholarly attention. The National Negro Business League, founded in 1900 and still in existence, established hundreds of chapters throughout the country and fostered vibrant business communities. And National Negro Health Week, established in 1915, was an important effort to reduce health disparities. By 1930 National Negro Health Week had become the National Negro Health Movement, and its initiatives, which emphasized health education and facilitated access to health care, had contributed to the rise in the life span for black Americans from 35 to 45 years.

Until recently, because of lengthy renovations to the main library and other physical facilities issues, access to the Tuskegee University Archives has been severely restricted, and processing materials has been delayed. Processing and digitizing materials from these large collections—which include correspondence, publications, flyers, posters, photographs, and other documents—will represent an invaluable contribution to humanities scholarship, providing opportunities for pioneering humanities research and curriculum development not only for

faculty and students at Tuskegee University but for scholars throughout the country and beyond.

Toward the end of the grant period, a public symposium will be convened during which noted humanities scholars will address Washington's legacy, and project participants will also present their scholarly papers. The symposium, which will be held in the Tuskegee University Kellogg Conference Center, will provide an opportunity for Tuskegee faculty and students, visiting scholars, and members of the public to engage in a meaningful exchange of ideas on the significance of Washington's achievements from the perspectives of the twenty-first century.

All grant activities will constitute the first phase of an ongoing humanities institute that will develop humanities programs and activities, particularly those that draw on the university's history and underscore humanities connections to other disciplines.

Project Personnel

The project directors are Dr. Loretta S. Burns, professor of English and chair of the Department of English; Dr. Lisa Beth Hill, associate professor of history and chair of the Department of History; and Mr. Dana Chandler, university archivist (see Appendix D).

Faculty members from the Departments of English and History (see Appendices E and I) will conduct research projects leading to scholarly papers and modify selected English and history courses based on their research. Dr. Burns and Dr. Hill, in consultation with other English and history faculty, will develop the interdisciplinary, team-taught humanities course.

Dr. Kenneth Hamilton, associate professor of history and director of ethnic studies at Southern Methodist University, will serve as a consultant for the project. The following scholars

will participate in the fall 2015 symposium: Dr. Deborah McDowell, Alice Griffin Professor of English and director of the Carter G. Woodson Institute at the University of Virginia; Dr. Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, professor of history at Michigan State University; and Dr. Michael Bieze, chair of the Fine Arts Department at Marist School (see Appendices F & G). A fourth symposium scholar will be identified at a later date.

The National Park Service and the Alabama Department of Archives and History will support the symposium and serve as general consultants.

Institutional Context

As noted in Tuskegee University's mission statement, its programs are "structured on solid foundations in the liberal arts." Accordingly, all students are required to take 15-19 hours in the humanities as part of a core of liberal arts courses. The curriculum-enhancement component of the project involves enriching existing courses in composition, literature, and history and developing an interdisciplinary, team-taught course, Humanities 200. These courses will be available to all students as core electives. The scholarly research and digital resource development aspects of the project comport with the university's mission to "preserve, refine, and develop further [existing] bodies of knowledge."

Humanities programs at the university include the Departments of English, History, Fine and Performing Arts, and a program in philosophy, and the university offers the BA degree in the humanities disciplines of English and history. The humanities curriculum at the university is supported by co-curricular activities such as the Ralph Ellison Lecture, the William L. Dawson Lecture and Institute, the Black History and Women's History Lecture Series, and similar events.

The Tuskegee University Library System provides crucial support for the university's academic programs; however, one underutilized division of the system is the Archives, an extraordinary repository that includes, among other treasures, important collections relating to black American history and culture. The Archives will offer faculty and students participating in the project a unique opportunity to collaborate on rigorous and exciting humanities research and to develop a deeper understanding of digital scholarship in the humanities.

Follow-up and Dissemination

Faculty and students will present the results of their research projects at an on-campus public symposium and at other professional conferences beyond the grant period. The curriculum enhancements—enrichment of existing courses and the development of a new humanities course—will also ensure the long-term impact of the project.

Digitized archival materials as well as teaching and research resources developed as part of the project will become a permanent addition to the Tuskegee University Archives Repository Web site. Machine-Readable Cataloguing (MARC) standards, developed by the Library of Congress, will be used to describe bibliographic information, providing ease of access for users both within and beyond the university. The Archives Repository Web site has attracted over 500,000 hits since its inception in 2010—over 45% outside the United States; hence the work accomplished during the grant period will not only be preserved but will have the potential to reach a worldwide audience.

Finally, the project will launch an ongoing humanities institute to develop programs and activities across a range of humanities disciplines. These programs will be open to the entire university as well as the general public.

Evaluation

In consultation with Tuskegee University's Office of Institutional Assessment, the project directors will devise a comprehensive plan to evaluate the project's success in strengthening and expanding humanities education and scholarship. Appropriate quantitative and qualitative instruments will be designed to evaluate—at key points in the timeline—the various aspects of the project: research, curriculum and program enhancement, and digital resource development (see Appendix C).

At the end of the first summer of the grant period (2014), all components of the project will be evaluated to determine whether project activities are proceeding as planned or being implemented as envisioned. This early measure of the project's successes and/or shortcomings will allow staff to make adjustments, if needed, to ensure the achievement of the proposal's broader aims. During the 2014 fall semester, existing courses that were modified and the new course, Humanities 200, will be evaluated by both faculty and students. The quantitative and qualitative data gathered by the 2015 spring semester will guide the planning of activities for the final summer and for the closing symposium. The symposium, which will be videotaped and made available on the Archives Web site, will also incorporate quantitative and qualitative measures, including an end-of-event survey, to gauge its effectiveness.

Lastly, an end-of-project evaluation will be conducted to measure project outcomes in three key areas: scholarship, teaching and learning, and archival design and dissemination.

Anticipated outcomes are an increase in faculty-student humanities research collaborations, an enhanced humanities curriculum, increased use of archival and other library resources, and enriched learning opportunities and intellectual experiences.

Appendix A

Core Reading List for “A Critical Reappraisal of Booker T. Washington: A Tuskegee Humanities Initiative”

Primary Sources

Bieze, Michael and Marybeth Gasman, eds. *Booker T. Washington Rediscovered*. The Johns Hopkins UP, 2012.

Washington, Booker T. *Up from Slavery: An Autobiography*, with an introduction by William L. Andrews. New York: Doubleday, Page, & Co., 1901; W.W. Norton, 1996.

Secondary Sources

Books

Bieze, Michael. *Booker T. Washington and the Art of Self-Representation*. New York: Lang, 2008.

Brundage, W. Fitzhugh, ed. *Booker T. Washington and Black Progress: Up from Slavery 100 Years Later*. UP of Florida. 2003.

Carroll, Rebecca, ed. *Uncle Tom or New Negro? African Americans Reflect on Booker T. Washington and Up from Slavery One Hundred Years Later*. New York: Broadway Books/Harlem Moon, 2006.

Dagbovie, Pero Gaglo. *African American History Reconsidered*. U of Illinois P, 2010.

Harlan, Louis R. *Booker T. Washington in Perspective: Essays of Louis R. Harlan*. UP of Mississippi, 1989.

McDowell, Deborah E., and Arnold Rampersad, eds. *Slavery and the Literary Imagination*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1989.

Articles

Baurlein, Mark. “Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois: The Origins of a Bitter Intellectual Battle.” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 46 (Winter 2004-2005): 106-114.

Dagbovie, Pero Gaglo. “Exploring a Century of Historical Scholarship on Booker T. Washington.” *The Journal of African American History* 92. 2 (Spring 2007): 239-264.

Norrell, Robert J.. “Have Historians Given Booker T. Washington a Bad Rap?” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 62 (Winter 2008/2009): 62-69.

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Zimmerman, Andrew. *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South*. Princeton UP, 2012

Appendix C

Work Plan/Schedule of Activities

January – May 2014	<p>Project directors work with advisory committee of faculty participants and Office of Research, Assessment, and Planning to develop grant activities: faculty-student research collaborations; workshops for project participants; interdisciplinary course, Humanities 200; enhancements of existing courses; closing symposium; and comprehensive evaluation strategy</p> <p>Consultant scholar visits to provide advice and guidance on the above activities</p> <p>Processing and digitizing of archival BTW materials begin</p>
June – July 2014	<p>Faculty and students attend workshops on archival research</p> <p>Faculty work on research and curriculum enhancement projects</p> <p>Project directors and other faculty develop syllabus for Humanities 200</p> <p>Student workers begin assisting with processing archival materials</p>
August – December 2014	<p>Pilot of Humanities 200, Special Topics in Humanities, is launched</p> <p>Pilot projects of revisions to existing humanities courses are implemented</p> <p>Processing and digitizing of archival BTW materials continue</p>

<p>January – May 2015</p>	<p>Project directors oversee evaluations of Humanities 200 and enhanced humanities courses</p> <p>Project directors evaluate progress of faculty-student research projects underway and make recommendations based on evaluations</p> <p>Processing and digitizing of archival BTW materials continue</p> <p>Project directors complete plans for fall symposium</p>
<p>June – July 2015</p>	<p>Faculty and students attend workshops on archival research</p> <p>Faculty work on research and curriculum enhancement projects</p> <p>Project directors and other faculty revise syllabus for Humanities 200</p> <p>Student workers assist with processing archival materials</p> <p>Project directors oversee pilot launch of new section of digital resources on TU Archives Web site</p>
<p>August – December 2015</p>	<p>Project directors again oversee evaluations of Humanities 200 and enhanced humanities courses</p> <p>New section of TU Archives Web site is officially launched</p> <p>Symposium is held on centenary of BTW's death</p> <p>Project directors initiate comprehensive evaluation of project</p>
<p>February 2016</p>	<p>End-of-project evaluation, final report, and financial forms are files</p>

Appendix F

Brief Overview of Visiting Scholars Participating in A Critical Reappraisal of Booker T. Washington: A Tuskegee Humanities Initiative

Each of the scholars invited to contribute to “A Critical Reappraisal of Booker T. Washington: A Tuskegee Humanities Initiative” is uniquely qualified to offer a fresh perspective on the subject of the project.

Dr. Michael Bieze, chair of the Fine Arts Department at Marist School in Atlanta, Georgia, recently published *Booker T. Washington and the Art of Self-Representation* (2008), a groundbreaking work that reveals the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement on Washington’s thinking. Moreover, his scholarship not only reveals the depth of Washington’s interest in the humanities but also argues that Washington’s grasp of the medium of photography to represent himself offers new insights into what he sought to accomplish through an evolving public persona.

Dr. Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, professor of history and graduate director of the Department of History at Michigan State University, authored a 2007 article “Exploring a Century of Historical Scholarship on Booker T. Washington” in *The Journal of African American History*; this work is the basis of a chapter in his new book *African American History Reconsidered* (2010). Professor Dagbovie, having studied the historiography on Washington over the past century, is especially equipped to offer a historical perspective on Washington’s legacy and his place in African American history.

Dr. Kenneth E. Hamilton, associate professor of history and director of ethnic studies at Southern Methodist University, has written “African Americans After Reconstruction and During the Era of Booker T. Washington,” which appears in *The African American Odyssey: The Quest for Full Citizenship*, a companion publication to a Library of Congress exhibit at the Smithsonian. An expert in the role of black entrepreneurship in the 19th Century, Dr. Hamilton is in the final stages of a book on Washington.

Dr. Deborah E. McDowell, Alice Griffin Professor of English and director of the Carter G. Woodson Institute of African-American and African Studies at the University of Virginia, has published widely over the course of a distinguished career. Her scholarship ranges from Frederick Douglass to Toni Morrison, and she is well known for her work on slavery’s impact on literature. Dr. McDowell, who is also a Tuskegee graduate, is uniquely capable of reassessing Washington’s place in American literature.

Appendix L

Brief History of Tuskegee University and Key Institutional Data

Tuskegee University is a coeducational, independent, and state-related institution located in Tuskegee, Alabama, 40 miles east of the Alabama State Capitol, in Montgomery, Alabama. With the help of the community, especially local leader Lewis Adams, Booker T. Washington founded the school on July 4, 1881, to educate African American teachers. Today Tuskegee University serves a student body that is predominately black yet racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse and open to all.

Its academic programs are organized into five colleges/schools, and currently over forty undergraduate degree programs and sixteen graduate degree programs are offered. The university is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

In 2012-2013, the university enrolled 3,117 students and employed 170 faculty and over 700 support staff. Physical facilities include more than 5,000 acres of forestry and farm land and a campus of more than 70 major buildings, many of historic significance.

Tuskegee University was the first black college to be designated as a Registered National Historic Landmark (April 2, 1966) and the only black college to be designated a National Historic Site (October 26, 1974). Of special note are the Booker T. Washington Monument, "Lifting the Veil"; the Oaks, Booker T. Washington's home; the George Washington Carver Museum; and the Tuskegee University Archives.

Source: The Tuskegee University Web site and the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning