“A polymath is one who not only mastered one or several disciplines, but one who uniquely synthesized them, integrated them.” — Sidney Harman

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Second Annual USC Harman Academy Polymathic Student Retreat

The USC Sidney Harman Academy for Polymathic Study at the USC Libraries announces an exciting opportunity for intellectually curious and creative students. Five to eight participants will be selected to form an intensive, multi-disciplinary committee for the planning and organizing of the 2nd Annual USC Harman Academy Polymathic Student Retreat in the spring of 2016.

CONCEPT

The Harman Academy offers a variety of programming that encourages an integrative approach to problem solving that draws from across the disciplines. The annual Student Retreat lets students take the lead in identifying a topic for discussion and in formulating a weekend retreat at USC’s Catalina facilities. In spring 2015, twenty-five students grappled with a variety of issues under the rubric, “Gaps in Communication.” Alongside more than a dozen faculty, they discussed conflict resolution, race and gender in America, and the different ways of knowing modelled in the arts and performance. They also kayaked, danced, hiked, and stayed up late continuing vibrant discussions begun in more structured daytime sessions.

A panel of student organizers will be chosen in the fall via an application process to select the theme, review submissions, and organize the participants for the spring 2016 Student Retreat. The entire conference will be student organized and led, with professors and other guests participating by student invitation. The Student Retreat has already proven an exciting addition to Academy programming that allows students to become engaged in polymathic thought and discussion at a deeper and more sustained level. We look forward to seeing what this year’s committee designs.

For more information, please visit our website at:
http://polymathic.usc.edu/

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The committee will consist of five to eight USC undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds who will meet throughout the Academic Year to organize, plan, and coordinate the retreat in early April 2016. The planning meetings will vary based on committee members’ availability and the workflow of the planning process but require a firm commitment from committee participants.

With guidance from the Harman Academy leadership team, the committee will be entirely responsible for the genesis and execution of the retreat – from determining a theme to reading applications and selecting participants to targeting and inviting faculty and other guests. The shape and nature of the weekend will come entirely through the committee’s efforts, fulfilling the Harman
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Academy’s desire to create an undergraduate retreat that is both by and for students. The conference will aim to reflect the Harman Academy’s commitment to synthesizing and integrating diverse and multi-disciplinary viewpoints. This is an opportunity to shape an exciting part of Harman Academy and USC programming for you and your peers.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

We are inviting applications for eight undergraduate scholars to plan and organize the conference. We are looking for a diverse mix of creative, intellectually curious future leaders in their respective disciplines who will energetically embrace this unique and challenging opportunity. Participants will be expected to attend scheduled planning meetings beginning in October 2015 through the culmination of the retreat in April 2016.

Committee member duties include: formulation of retreat theme and panels; issuing a call for applicants; review of applications and selection of student and faculty retreat participants; extending invitations to students and guests across USC and beyond; and working with the Harman staff on event logistics and budget.

To apply, please send a CV, indicating at least two references, and your answer to the following question in 1 to 2 double-spaced, typewritten pages:

What is your vision for a polymathic (integrated interdisciplinary) student retreat? Include potential themes that would allow for interdisciplinary conversation and problem solving and feel free to suggest types of activities that you would like to see included.

Applications are due Monday, September 28th. Please send all materials to Maureen Lenker, Program Assistant, USC Sidney Harman Academy for Polymathic Study lenker@usc.edu and CC Dr. Karin Huebner, Director of Programs, USC Sidney Harman Academy for Polymathic Study khuebner@usc.edu. Selected participants will be notified by October 12th.