

## ***Instructionally Related Activities Report Form***

SPONSOR: Alison Locke Perchuk / Amy Caldwell

PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT: Art / History

ACTIVITY TITLE: UNIV 198: Game of Thrones and the Modern Middle Ages

DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY: Spring 2017

Please submit via email to the IRA Coordinator along with any supporting documentation at [david.daniels@csuci.edu](mailto:david.daniels@csuci.edu) within 30 days after the activity. Thank you for your commitment to engaging our students!

### **A. ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- (1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY;
  - (2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?
  - (3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?
  - (4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY'S WEAKNESSES?
  - (5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?
  - (6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?
  - (7) WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE ACTIVITY? ATTACH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OR ASSESSMENTS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH FERPA RESTRICTIONS YOU MUST REMOVE ALL PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION)
  - 8) GIVE A SUMMARY OF EXPENSES FOR THE ACTIVITY.
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### **B. ATTENDEE LIST- SUPPORTING DOCUMENT:**

In addition to the report form, *in a separate document*, attach to your email a list of attendees complete with each student major and grade level. This for IRA Committee reference only and will not be published on the IRA website. Include your name and the title of your IRA activity on the document.

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### **C.IMAGES FROM ACTIVITY:**

Finally, attach to your email up to 6 images demonstrating student participation (under 2 MB total) with captions/titles. Please attach these photos in .JPEG format directly to email. Thank you!

### **(1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY**

During Spring 2017, Professors Caldwell and Perchuk offered a new, team-taught interdisciplinary seminar targeted at first-year students. Developed within the SPIRAL initiative to support undergraduate research, this course used the television series “Game of Thrones” as a heuristic to diverse critical perspectives in the humanities and social sciences, focused on understanding how the middle ages resonates in contemporary US society. Grant funds were used to expand the range of scholarly perspectives in the classroom, by funding two guest speakers: Dr. Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri of the University of Urbino, Italy, who is one of Europe’s leading scholars on political medievalism; and Dr. Bryan Keene of the Getty Museum, who is a manuscript specialist with deep knowledge of the visual culture of Game of Thrones (on which he authors blog posts for the Getty Iris). Funds also supported a field trip to “medieval Los Angeles,” during which we visited the neo-medieval monuments and buildings of Forest Lawn Memorial-Park in Glendale and of the UCLA campus in Westwood.

### **(2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?**

The activity comprised two guest speakers during regular class time and one required Saturday field trip. (The planned third speaker was not able to participate.) The speakers were invited to model ways to think about the Middle Ages in a contemporary context beyond those provided by the two instructors: Di Carpegna Falconieri’s talk was titled, “Should a Scholar Speak of Dragons?” and engaged the need for historians to study medievalism as well as the Middle Ages proper, while Keene’s presentation examined how art history informs popular culture through the example of Game of Thrones. The field trip focused on art and architecture, asking students to open their eyes to the medievalizing architecture in their midst and encouraging them to think historically about design choices. As students’ final projects were papers and presentations on an aspect of the modern middle ages, these events provided different perspectives and models for how they might pursue that research.

### **(3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?**

The activity’s primary strengths were: the diversification of scholarly voices in the classroom, the modeling of different intellectual approaches, the demonstration of ways to engage in a scholarly manner with popular culture, and the opportunity to view and discuss medievalizing popular culture in the field.

### **(4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY’S WEAKNESSES?**



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## INSTRUCTIONALLY RELATED ACTIVITIES

### C H A N N E L

The activity's primary weakness was that students did not engage in conversation with the guest speakers to the degree that we had hoped.

#### **(5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?**

Guest speakers are valuable instructional tool, as they bring a range of voices into the classroom, but it was challenging for us to get our students to engage in discussion with the guest speakers. In the future, we might work more closely with the speakers to select preparatory readings, etc., for that day or week; this might provide common ground to engage in a discussion. Alternately, we might work with students to prepare questions in advance and assign them to interlocutors, similarly as a spur to conversation.

#### **(6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?**

That it can be quite challenging to integrate guest speakers into the curriculum, particularly when the course is a brand new offering for both instructors.

#### **(7) WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE ACTIVITY? ATTACH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OR ASSESSMENTS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH FERPA RESTRICTIONS YOU MUST REMOVE ALL PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION)**

We did not gather separate student assessments for the activity. Written responses to the Student Review of Teaching were only offered by 4 of the 10 students in the course and none referenced the activity.

#### **(8) GIVE A SUMMARY OF EXPENSES FOR THE ACTIVITY.**

\$150 honorarium to Di Carpegna Falconieri  
\$200 honorarium to Keene  
Expenses for shuttle for day of field trip (paid directly by IRA office)

#### **B. ON SEPARATE DOCUMENT, PLEASE ATTACH ATTENDEE LIST (PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFO REMOVED)**

#### **C. PLEASE INCLUDE UP TO 6 IMAGES AS ATTACHMENTS TO YOUR SUBMISSION**

Participant List, IRA #864

Avila Vargas, Gabriela, Junior, Early Childhood Studies

Blaber, Peter Thomas, Junior, History

Burquez, Alec Joseph, Sophomore, English

Carrigan, Trinity Star, Freshman, Undeclared

Diaz, Stephanie – Unknown (registered late)

Gritz, Kendra Dawn, Junior, History

Hall, Sara Rose, Senior, Art (Art Studio Emphasis)

Johnson, Aryana – Unknown (registered late)

Keesler, Mallory Clare, Junior, History

Magana Mendez, Ericka, Sophomore, Sociology

Thomas, Amber Dawn, Freshman, History

Professor Amy Caldwell

Professor Alison Perchuk







# *Should a scholar talk of dragons?*

Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri  
Università di Urbino



Museum Meermanno, The Hague, ca 1450

