**The 2003-2006 Mellon Project   
New Perspectives on the Disciplines: Comparative Studies in Higher Education**   
Sponsored by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Over three years, the Mellon Project's conferences, lectures, and workshops, in conjunction with its fellows, faculty steering committee, colleagues and graduate students, investigated these questions:

* How do we best understand the disciplinary history of the Humanities and related Social Sciences in the American university over the last century and a quarter? How is this disciplinary history shaped by earlier theorists of the modern University in (say) Germany, France, Britain, and America?
* How did the area studies paradigm emerge and how do we assess its continued validity? What has this paradigm to do with cultural studies as a new formation and with the host of other "studies" that have emerged?
* How do postcolonial and globalization studies as fields bear on area studies and the various modes of cultural studies? What intellectual and institutional pressures does this new array of fields exert on disciplines such as criticism, anthropology, history, and philosophy?
* What happens to "humanities" globally in the context of the push for globalization? Does cultural studies take its place?
* Can universities outside the West — or even those in Western countries — construct "classics" in a non-Eurocentric manner? Do they need to?
* What can we learn or advise about educational structures and pedagogical practices now being developed in changing societies such as South Africa and Russia? In Central and South American universities, has the "technical streamlining" of higher education spelled doom for the Euro-American model of "liberal education"?
* How do high-powered university systems in, say, France, Britain, and America differ in the way in which academic intellectuals relate to their publics? What might be learned about area-specific disciplinarity from a comparative study of public intellectuals in cultures dominated by academic institutions?

We pursued these questions with regard to three general themes: "Disciplines, "Studies," Area Studies"; "Area-Specific Disciplinarity: Case Studies"; and "Comparative Studies in Higher Education: Dimensions of a Field."