

To: Dina Anselmi and Sean Cocco

From: Johannes F. Evelein, LACS

Re: Proposal to join the AY 21-22 CTL Fellows Program

Date: April 8, 2021

Dear Dina and Sean:

I would like to propose a teaching project in response to your **AY 21-22 CTL Fellows Call for Proposals**. I was particularly pleased to see the emphasis placed this year on curricular innovation within the context of the existential threat of climate change and Trinity faculty's expressed commitment to address it through curricular and program development. My proposal relates to the work on climate change within the Humanities that I have started to do and hope to expand and deepen through my collaborative work with colleagues in the CTL Fellows Program. What follows is a brief description, along with a rationale and envisioned outcome.

My project has two components:

1. ENVS/LACS 215: Reading the Climate—From Literature to Action. I am slated to teach my course on climate fiction again in spring '22. I am an environmentalist by persuasion, but not by training. Having taught this course twice, most recently last spring, has opened my eyes to the wealth of literature about the climate emergency: going back decades; global; and quickly developing into its own genre now referred to as "cli-fi". At the same time, it has propelled me to become more informed, to the extent that I can, about the science behind global warming. Moreover – and for this I really thank my students – I have become convinced that climate change and social justice are interwoven and that a Humanities-based course such as ENVS 215 must pay close attention to that link. My course has been a work in progress, but that work is now guided by two immediate needs: to anchor the course content more in climate science; and to strengthen the nexus between climate and social justice with a focus on, in particular, migration and refugee studies and local as well as global inequality amplified by the climate crisis.
2. As I am developing the ENVS/LACS 215 course described above, I am also hoping to create a new German Studies course that offers students insight into German environmental thought writ large. It is said, for instance, that the German mining

administrator Carl von Carlowitz coined the term “sustainability,” and a closer look at two centuries of German ideas reveals a sustained preoccupation with environmental concerns, in literature and philosophy but certainly also in popular movements such as anthroposophy and Wandervögel. It would of course be interesting, too, to investigate National-Socialist attitudes toward the sacredness of “German Nature,” and the notion of “Lebensraum” associated with ideas about sustainable agriculture and a lifestyle deemed “healthy” by Nazi standards. In addition, it was in Germany that the Green Movement in the 1970s and 1980s took root in earnest, resulting in the establishment of the Green Party and its development from a fringe oppositional entity into a mainstream party with significant impact. I see the makings of what I think could be a fascinating course.

I hope the above gives you enough of an impression of what I would like to undertake. Truth be told: I’m doing it already, but I would very much appreciate the opportunity to exchange ideas with CTL fellows, about my own project as well as theirs, and learn from their critical engagement. The first course described above is already on the books for next spring and will, I know, benefit from the CTL fellowship. The second course is still an idea, to be developed over the next year into a course to be offered AY 22-23.

Do let me know if you have questions for me.

With best wishes to you both,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Evelein', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Johannes Evelein
Professor and Chair, Language & Culture Studies