Dean Gretchen H. Gerzina's Welcome

Welcome!
Welcome back to what has been a lovely New England autumn of blue skies, crisp nights, and some much-needed rain. We hope that your classes are similarly off to a promising start in this new academic year.
As we welcome our new and returning students, we are also putting in place some exciting opportunities in Commonwealth Honors College. Our signature first-year seminar, “Ideas that Change the World,” now incorporates the use of one of the university’s most important library collections: the archive of the important twentieth-century writer W.E.B. DuBois, for whom the main library is named. Scholars already come from all over the world, and students will learn to use actual and digitized materials in their work. “Ideas that Change the World” has now expanded into several community colleges throughout Massachusetts, where students will experience our fine teaching and learning opportunities on their own campuses, through the Honors to Honors program.

Honors students can now do independent studies in the Seuss Museum in Springfield, under a collaborative agreement between CHC and the museum complex. Students will work on murals, research projects in education and local history, and engineering installations as this exciting new museum undergoes design and renovation ahead of its official opening in June 2017, and share their work in an on-campus course.

We are also finalizing a Junior Year Experience, launching in spring semester. Under the title “The 1960s: The Decade that Changed America,” students will hear from a variety of professors from around the university, and engage in small group seminars, on such topics as social change, music, the space program, and Civil Rights, over the course of the semester. The expectation is that a junior year experience will be offered every semester going forward, to further build our intellectual community across the various disciplines.

It promises to be an exciting year for us all.

Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, PhD
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