Wilkinson College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Wilkinson College of Humanities and Social Sciences, renamed from the Wilkinson College of Letters and Sciences in 2008, was founded in 1991 as the home of liberal arts. The introduction of Wilkinson College coincided with the transformation of Chapman from college to university. Offering programs in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, it became the heart of the Chapman academic curriculum. Through the work of its faculty and students, the College embodies Chapman’s mission of providing a personalized education of distinction and mentoring students to become global citizens.

Patrick Quinn, an English professor who received his Ph.D. at the University of Warwick, came from the University of Mississippi to Chapman to be the Dean of Wilkinson College in 2009. “Chapman appealed to me when I saw the ad because it seemed to be the kind of place where innovation could take place. It was a university on the move, it gave me many opportunities to come in with new and fresh ideas, and so it was kind of enticing to be thinking about what one could do at Chapman.” Since becoming Dean, Quinn has incorporated the Art program back into the College, and is now developing an Asian Studies minor, European Studies minor, and a collaboration with the Anglo-American University at Prague.

The History Department in Wilkinson College has achieved spectacular growth over the past few years with over two hundred students receiving BAs in History over the past decade. In 2004, Jennifer Keene came to Chapman University after teaching at the University of Redlands to be Chair of the History Department. She transformed the senior thesis process into a three-semester endeavor and helped establish the Alpha Mu Gamma chapter of the Phi Alpha Theta history honors society in 2006. This move supported higher caliber undergraduate research, giving students the opportunity to present their research at conferences across the nation and publish their work in the Department’s electronic journal, Voces Novae. William Cumiford (‘63) returned to teach history at the University in 1995. He embodies the spirit of personalized education, mentoring students and providing them with the opportunity to study abroad with his and Dr. Leland Estes’ summer travel course to Europe. Marilyn Harran, Stern Chair in Holocaust Education and Director of the Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education, came to Chapman in 1985 after nine years teaching at Columbia University. She established the Samuei Holocaust Memorial Library, continuing her commitment to preserving the memory of Holocaust victims and survivors. Marvin Meyer, Chair of the Religious Studies Department, similarly offers unique educational opportunities for students wanting to do primary research of ancient religious texts. He has received much recognition for his own work in the field, particularly his work on the Gospel of Judas. These professors and the rest of the faculty in the History Department have helped make Wilkinson a distinguished College that provides numerous opportunities for undergraduate research.
Interview with Dean of Wilkinson College of Arts and Sciences Patrick Quinn

Interview Chair of the History Department Jennifer Keene

Interview with Alumnus and History Professor William Cumiford ('63)
Interview with History Professor and Director of the Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education
Marilyn Harran

Interview with Chair of the Religious Studies Department and Director of the Albert Schweitzer Institute Marvin Meyer