The Humanities Center of the University of Hartford requests applications from faculty interested in becoming one of the distinguished Faculty Fellows of the Humanities Center for the 2021-2022 academic year, by offering a lecture focused on their own project related to the seminar topic of “Fiction, Fabulation, Futurity” during the Spring 2022 Humanities Lecture Series.

Rashmi Viswanathan, Assistant Professor of Art, will lead the Humanities Center Seminar for next year. She has selected the theme of “Fiction, Fabulation, Futurity” for the seminar. Here is a description of the seminar:

The narrative, poetic, and artistic forms of speculative and science fiction offer modes of storytelling that question our relationship with received truths. They not only effectively function as platforms for social critique -- “looking from the outside in” -- they dream new ways forward and backward. Whether in the contributions of the novelist Octavia Butler, that unstick time and space to activate empathy across Modern divides, or Begum Rokeya, whose writings challenge received gender roles and the imperialism of the Western liberal imagination of the early 20th century, speculations on the past, present, and future permit imaginative re-alignments of power, identity, and meaning making.

Over the course of the class, students will be assigned readings, directed responses, and presentations that address the issues under analysis. Through interactive discussion and presentation-based learning, I hope to productively place the process of learning in the students’ hands. The final project will represent a culmination of the scholarship as well as methodologies of the class. Students will be asked to curate a speculative exhibition on the topic of their choice. Whether dreaming new cities or new roles and functions for the arts, the students will apply their interdisciplinary education to reinterpreting modern life.

This course aligns with the University of Hartford Gallery programming for 2021 and serves as a complement to the university’s eponymous International Distinguished Artist Symposium and Exhibition. The Spring semester will feature series of lectures by faculty members and visiting speakers on the topic of “Fiction, Fabulation, Futurity.”

Possible disciplinary overlaps include (but are certainly not limited to): Visual culture; political and social histories; literature and the arts; historiography; cinema; pop culture (graphic novels, comic books, television); architecture and design; and biology.
The advantages and responsibilities of being a Faculty Fellow include the following:

- Faculty Fellows will be working on a scholarly or pedagogical project in a context that will offer encouragement and a testing site for the development of their ideas. The Humanities Center expects that the project will lay the groundwork for a future publication or equivalent dissemination of scholarship or artistic product.

- Each Faculty Fellow will give a talk as part of the Spring 2022 series of lectures associated with the theme. The lecture will give each Fellow an opportunity to present the results of their research on the project.

- Fellows receive a stipend of $1,500 to enable them to read, write, do research, and prepare their spring lecture.

- Faculty Fellows are encouraged to participate in the honors course in the fall term and are expected to attend the Tuesday evening talks by other Fellows during the Spring lecture series.

All full-time faculty interested in becoming a Faculty Fellow of the Humanities Center for the 2021-2022 academic year, please email a one-page proposal that describes the focus of your interest as it is related to the course topic, “Lights, Camera, Activism,” and the material to be addressed in your spring talk, along with a CV, to Bryan Sinche (sinche@hartford.edu) and Rashmi Viswanathan (viswanath@hartford.edu) no later than Friday, April 2, 2021.

The Humanities Center at the University of Hartford supports interdisciplinary scholarship focusing on the humanities through arts, sciences, technology, media, music, psychology, history, film, philosophy and literature. For more information, contact Bryan Sinche, director, at sinche@hartford.edu.