Caspersen School of Graduate Studies

Statement of Character

The Caspersen School is an integral part of Drew University. The concept of a university derives from “universe,” which implies a turning around one point. The image may be that of a wheel and its hub. The universe of our discourse centers upon a deep, close inquiry into the inmost nature of human understanding and creativity. Sometimes expressed in literature or liturgy, often expressed in intellectual history, or theology, our inquiry is basically interdisciplinary. In a shorthand manner we speak of our being devoted to advanced studies in aspects of the Humanities.

Once characterized as “the greatest of all keys to the history, mind and thoughts of civilization,” the Humanities are identified in the Caspersen School by reference to interdisciplinary inquiry. In this way we are free to engage in open discourse as a small community of scholars some of whose fields are too often divorced from the Humanities per se. Thus, we do seek to define the Humanities by appeal not to exclusion but to inclusion. What the hub of our inquiry includes, we welcome.

In another sense we practice inclusion by inviting into the Caspersen School students and faculty of widely diverging points of view. We respect diversity not as virtuous in and of itself but as essential to the unfolding of our common task, for the hub of our experience is both an idea and a task.

We are dedicated to providing graduate education of world class quality. Therefore our admissions policy is highly selective. We seek talented students from many nations who are knowledgeable about their convictions, creative and self-disciplined, and who relish the opportunity for untrammeled intellectual adventure.

We look upon our common task as both descriptive and therapeutic. We are constantly concerned with facts without neglecting the pursuit of meaning in a global context. We revere knowledge for its own sake, yet our mission leads us to the pursuit of wisdom and the common good.