



Dr. Elizabeth Hyde

Dr. Elizabeth Hyde is associate professor and assistant chair of the Department of History. She received her Ph.D. in European history at Harvard University. She joined Kean in 2007.

Dr. Hyde has worked diligently to embody the teacher-scholar model so vital to a teaching institution. She created and chairs the Department of History Undergraduate Learning Committee, a committee that organizes and oversees undergraduate programming and resources in the department, including advising meetings, career seminars and resources, writing workshops, and student organizations. In 2012, she, along with Dr. Jonathan Mercantini, received a QFI Award for the creation of the Department of History Honors Program. The program they designed received approval in spring 2013 and is now flourishing.

In her capacity as co-director and teacher in the Honors Program, Dr. Hyde has worked to facilitate student involvement in conducting original historical research while utilizing the unique resources here at Kean and at Liberty Hall. She, along with Dr. Mercantini, initiated one of the first student-centered collaborations with the Kean University Archives and Special Collections and Center for History, Politics and Policy with the launch of Honors Program “Nancy Thompson World War II Scrapbook Project.” For the project, history honors students have been engaged in the scanning, transcription, and analysis of letters written by Newark State Teacher’s College students and alumni as they scattered around the globe in a range of roles during World War II. The first four honors students working on the project were among 60 participants (selected from over 600 applicants) honored to present their work at “Posters on the Hill” in spring 2014 in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by The Council on Undergraduate Research, “Posters on the Hill” is intended to help members of Congress understand the importance of undergraduate research by giving them the opportunity to talk directly with students. Nine history honors students, along with Dr. Elizabeth Hyde and Dr. Jonathan Mercantini, presented their work at the Northeast Regional Honors Conference, “Battlefields of Change” in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Those nine, along with a student in the computer science program here at Kean, will highlight these project outcomes and debut the digital component to the project here at Research Day.

This spring, Dr. Hyde, along with Dr. C. Brid Nicholson, launched a new collaborative research project on the Florence Dwyer Papers in the Kean University Archives. Partnering again with the Archives’s Erin Alghandoor and the Center for History, Politics and Policy’s Shane Derris, the project was designed to introduce students to original historical research through the study and analysis of the papers of New Jersey Congresswoman Florence Dwyer, who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1958 to 1972, and whose papers are housed in the Kean University Archives. Dr. Hyde and Dr. Nicholson shepherded thirty-five students through the exploration of the Dwyer archive, the creation of posters summarizing their findings, and the design of lesson plans hosted on the Archive website for their use in K-12 classrooms. The students presented their posters at the New Jersey State House in Trenton.

Dr. Hyde is the first to acknowledge that each of these projects on which she has been privileged to advise, guide, and mentor students is the result of teamwork with valued colleagues and students. These projects demonstrate the outstanding work that can emanate from collaboration across disciplines and departments. And they highlight how engaging students in original research in the humanities allows them to grow their research, writing, and critical thinking skills while modeling for them the excitement and intellectual rewards to be had from being part of a larger project in collaboration with their peers.