



History Program Review 2016-17

Closing MOU

September 28, 2017

Overview

Degree/Certificate Programs Reviewed: History, Bachelor of Arts
History, Master of Arts
Teaching History, Master of Arts
History, Dr. of Philosophy

Department Chair & Dean: Dennis Dworkin, Chair; Debra Modellmog, Dean

External Reviewers & Affiliation: Dr. William Bryans, Associate Professor, Dept. of History, Oklahoma State University
Dr. Eric Porter, Professor, Dept. of History, UC Santa Cruz



Date of External Visit: April 13-14, 2017

Review Process Summary

The History programs were scheduled for regular program review as mandated by the Board of Regents and University policy. A self-study document for the department was developed by the department faculty and completed in Spring 2017. The report was provided to two reviewers before they conducted an on-campus visit on April 13-14, 2017. The external reviewers reviewed the programs and met with relevant faculty, staff, students and administrators to determine the program's accomplishments, examine strengths and weaknesses, and identify opportunities as its plans for the future. A final report was issued by the reviewers shortly after the visit. In accordance with institution practice, responses to the review were solicited from the department and college. A final meeting of all parties took place on September 18, 2017. This documents represents the final MOU of recommendations and findings from the review.

Signatures

Executive Vice President &
Provost:
Vice Provost, Undergraduate
Education:

 Date: 9/29/17
 Date: 10/3/17

Major Findings and Conclusions

1. Productive and collegial department, despite some personnel turnover
2. Excellent and dedicated faculty
3. Steady undergraduate enrollment despite a national trend of declining enrollments in History
4. Shared History program is commendable and is an opportunity for future strength

5. Small size for a “full service” department
6. Budget constraints
7. Service demands on faculty
8. Department faculty value the History Writing Center and feel it is not duplicative of the services of the University Writing Center because it focuses on field-specific assistance
9. Declining graduate enrollments. *There were 10 Ph.D. grads in 2013, only 4 in 2017 which could be a problem in the near future considering low yield benchmarks. The department chair notes that declining enrollments are an issue for many humanities departments. They are mindful of the issue, and an ad hoc committee is looking at ways of improving recruitment. Currently, only 1/3 of Ph.D.’s are getting tenure-track jobs, so they need to consider this as well.*

Next Steps for this Program/Department

1. Regarding faculty recruitment, they have 3 new hires this year—one in Latin American history, an African American historian, and an American West historian. The cybersecurity hire gives them access to expertise on middle-eastern topics. Because of these hires, they expect to have a vast expansion of courses.
2. The department should address flat undergraduate enrollment by looking for ways to increase the appeal of the major. This includes updating the department website to convey the breadth and dynamism of the department to prospective undergraduate as well as to graduate students. Also, the existing menu of undergraduate courses is quite large; consider updating/replacing course offerings with courses of contemporary interest and broad appeal, and with substantial enrollment capacity.
3. The hire of a Latina/o faculty member could increase enrollments. It is recommended that a hire in the area of US Chicana history be requested in the next RFP process. This position could be coordinated with the GRI program.
4. Implement direct admission to Ph.D. program and retain twice-a-year admission to all graduate programs.
5. The department should explore participation in GradFIT as one approach to graduate recruitment.
6. Consider alternative capstone projects in HIST 499 or implement an alternative capstone course if faculty workload in maintaining quality of undergraduate research becomes a problem. One option to consider is team-based projects similar to what Biochemistry and Engineering have implemented.
7. Undergraduate survey data should be included as part of the undergraduate assessment plan. A graduating senior survey is possible. Limited alumni data is available from Career Studio.
8. Additional funding for graduate students should be explored by participating in the GA RFP process with the assistance of the campus administration.
9. A yearly evaluation process for all History Department graduate students should be implemented.
10. Clarify graduate program requirements and address graduate student concerns by improving department website and formalizing regular, intradepartmental communication among faculty and graduate students.

11. Update the Graduate Handbook to provide a consistent description of the expectations of graduate student and requirements for progression.
12. Once each semester the chair and graduate advisor should hold a meeting with grad students to answer questions and provide guidance.
13. Eliminate the comprehensive examination requirement for the MA program. Consider implementing the grad student changes identified in the 2016 master plan: 5 year BA-MA, MATH program needs, and streamlining.
14. Grow the Shared History program as a means of helping students find careers in museums, archives, historical agencies, non-profits, and the private sector. This is aligned with the University's goals to achieve the Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification. It affords opportunities for students to undertake service learning, enhances existing and new collaborations with other departments, and potentially extramural support.
15. Participate or increase participation in the Service Learning Council.
16. Central administration acknowledges the desirability of staffing Shared History with a full-time coordinator/director. Consider defining this position along the lines of the professor of practice model (consult with the Reynolds School of Journalism about this model). The coordinator/director should be made an integral part of the life of the department and its teaching, and seen as a peer to other faculty members.
17. Central administration acknowledges the need for an additional full-time or part-time staff person to assist with department operations. The department should submit a request when solicited.
18. Implement the best practices defined by the college and central administration for service obligations and personnel actions for faculty holding joint appointments.
19. Central administration acknowledges the need for library resources and databases aligned with R1 expectations.
20. All colleges have been directed to ensure that formal mentoring plans and programs for junior faculty are in place next fall. These plans should address not only assistant professors on the tenure track but also associate professors who should seek promotion to full professor.

Vital Statistics on NSHE Reports

History, B.A.

Number of students with declared major in the program area:	140
Number of graduates from the program, 2014-15:	28
Number of graduates from the program, 2015-16:	38
Number of graduates from the program, 2016-17:	19
Headcount of students enrolled in any course related to the program (duplicated):	6,549

History, M.A.

Number of students with declared major in the program area:	18
Number of graduates from the program, 2014-15:	3
Number of graduates from the program, 2015-16:	3
Number of graduates from the program, 2016-17:	0
Headcount of students enrolled in any course related to the program (duplicated):	69*

Teaching of History, M.A.

Number of students with declared major in the program area:	2
Number of graduates from the program, 2014-15:	1
Number of graduates from the program, 2015-16:	1
Number of graduates from the program, 2016-17:	1
Headcount of students enrolled in any course related to the program (duplicated):	69*

History, Ph.D.

Number of students with declared major in the program area:	8
Number of graduates from the program, 2014-15:	2
Number of graduates from the program, 2015-16:	0
Number of graduates from the program, 2016-17:	3
Headcount of students enrolled in any course related to the program (duplicated):	15

*There is no differentiation between History courses and Teaching History courses in the data warehouse, so the numbers for course enrollments in each subject are the same.