

History Program Review
Program Action Plan
September 2012

The History Program appreciates the overwhelmingly positive nature of the external reviewer and Continuous Improvement Committee comments: "The College of Arts and Sciences is fortunate to have such a program that embodies integrative standards as thoroughly and effectively as does the History program" ... "The unique characteristics of the History program are a selling point of the university and should be center stage in any promotional literature" ... "A hard-working and effective group of scholars [who] despite multiple demands on their time ... are publishing at a prodigious rate." These comments, even as there is clear recognition that there is "desperate need of more tenure-track positions."

That said, the history program believes that always there are ways to improve. The reflection of our self-study and the external input has been valuable as the history faculty seeks to build, strengthen, and improve the program. This action plan is based primarily upon the recommendations offered by the external reviewers.

1) *"The program needs additional tenure-track faculty to ensure that it can meet the needs of its growing major and can strengthen its exemplary program so that it continues to reflect the evolving nature of the discipline."*

The history program wholeheartedly agrees. The program will work with the AVP for Arts & Sciences, the Provost, and others to recommend searches. In the next five years, prioritized faculty needs would be hiring assistant professors in:

- European History (possibly focused on ancient, early modern, or modern -- all are needed)
- United States History (possibly focused on 19th-century, women and/or Native American)
- World History

Special note: depending on the significant long-term commitments of Marie Francois to other parts of the campus, it may also become an immediate imperative to hire at least a full-time lecturer in Latin America.

2) *"While the program may eventually want to develop an M.A. program, it must first determine what its targeted audience would be and whether it can afford to devote resources at this time."*

The history faculty believe that the M.A. program will be valuable for the campus and the community -- be it our own students or others seeking to go on to graduate school, teachers in the region seeking professional development, or community members seeking to enrich themselves and the community in which they live. At the same time, the program recognizes that it already is stretched thin and needs more tenure-track hires to be able to implement an M.A. program.

The program will continue the planning process for the M.A. in the next two years (currently the short form has been approved and it is on the Academic Master Plan) while also waiting on any implementation of the M.A. In this, the program will work with AVP Bill Cordeiro in his role as head of academic planning.

3) *"It makes sense to make HIST 280 The Historian's Craft an upper-division gateway course."*

History 280 is designed to help build the skills and tools needed in upper-division history courses. Within two years, the chair of history will submit the course modification forms needed

to renumber History 280 as History 300 so that students see this as the start of upper division work, continue to advise students (native and transfer) take this before or as they embark on UD history courses, and make it a pre-requisite for enrollment in Historiography and Capstone.

4) *"We strongly urge the program to revise course learning outcomes to bring them into alignment with program learning outcomes and ask the university to provide guidance and support to the program for assessment."*

Working with the AVPAA for Assessment and APVAA for Curriculum, history faculty will continue in the next two- and five-year periods to reduce, align, and assess course learning outcomes and program learning outcomes.

The program will work to create a reasonable plan to assess those outcomes over the next five years that will make the best use of limited tenure-track faculty time. Beginning in AY 2012-13, the program expects to assess one or two course-level student learning outcomes for two courses a year, one lower division (one outcome in multiple sections of the same course where relevant) and one upper division (two outcomes) on a rotating basis. Included in this course-level assessment is consideration of the degree to which the outcomes align with the program learning outcomes. One program learning outcome a year will also be assessed, adapting and improving the strategies used in the first assessment cycle (2005/06-2009/10).

5) *"The program, with the assistance of the university, should build upon its foundation of good community relations and strengthen its relations with alumni and better promote the programs strengths, including its strong preparation of students for a variety of careers."*

The history program will continue to work to promote community relations. We will continue to promote and expand the History Community Seminar as well as the lecture series on Global Histories. We will maintain current and develop new community partnerships such the Olivas Adobe Ranch, the Reagan Library, and the Museum of Ventura County in order to continue to provide students with enriching internship experiences.

As part of this, in the next two- and five-year time frames the program will work to strengthen its communication with current students as well as further strengthen ties with history alumni and the community. The help of the university in website support could help enhance that as a resource for current students, prospective students, and the broader public.

6) *"We recommend that the program reconsider its current capstone offerings to ensure that students have a summative learning experience, while retaining the possibility of an internship or other service learning activities."*

While this recommendation needs more discussion, initial thinking is that making the internship an UD elective and the Capstone a required summative learning experience is workable but might take some additional resources and planning. As part of the planning, the program will consult with the AVP for A&S to look at internship possibilities and support for those throughout the curriculum as well as dedicated internship sections.

7) *"The History program may want to consider a mentoring system for the benefit of any junior faculty that would help guide them towards successful tenure and promotion reviews."* (p. 7)
The History Program wholeheartedly looks forward to having junior faculty with whom to establish a mentoring system, and will consult with those experienced in mentoring about establishing a mentoring program within the next two years.