




April 3, 2018

Keith Diaz Moore
Interim Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
205 Park Bldg.
Campus

4.4.18 

RE: Graduate Council Review
Department of History


4-7-18

Dear Vice President Diaz Moore:

Enclosed is the Graduate Council's review of the Department of History. Included in this review packet are the report prepared by the Graduate Council, the Department Profile, and the Memorandum of Understanding resulting from the review wrap-up meeting.

After your approval, please forward this packet to President Ruth Watkins for her review. It will then be sent to the Academic Senate to be placed on the information calendar for the next Senate meeting.

Sincerely,



David B. Kieda
Dean, The Graduate School

Encl.

XC: Eric Hinderaker, Chair, Department of History
Benjamin Cohen, Professor, Department of History
Stuart Culver, Co-Interim Dean, College of Humanities
Barry Weller, Co-Interim Dean, College of Humanities

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The Department of History

Having several faculty members play lead roles as center and program directors has resulted in both benefits and challenges. Going forward, one priority is to proactively build a collaborative intellectual community within the department, with some initiatives already underway. The Department is participating in a Career Diversity Initiative developed by the American Historical Association and was commended for the steps they have taken in curricular reform.

The Graduate School - The University of Utah

GRADUATE COUNCIL REPORT TO THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND THE ACADEMIC SENATE

November 27, 2017

The Graduate Council has completed its review of the **Department of History**. The External Review Committee included:

Matthew Guterl, PhD
Chair, American Studies
Professor, Africana Studies/American Studies/Ethnic Studies
Brown University

Cynthia Radding, PhD
Gussenhoven Distinguished Professor
Department of History
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Louis Warren, PhD
W. Turrentine Jackson Professor of Western US History
Department of History
University of California, Davis

The Internal Review Committee of the University of Utah included:

Thomas J. Cova, PhD
Professor
Department of Geography

Sydney Cheek-O'Donnell, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Theatre

Monty Paret, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Art and Art History
Associate Dean, Honors College

This report of the Graduate Council is based on the self-study submitted by the Department of History, the reports of the external and internal review committees, and the responses to the external and internal reports from the department chair and college dean.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Department of History embraces a mission of increasing historical understanding and knowledge by conducting and disseminating original research and teaching history as well as transferable skills leading to diverse careers for both undergraduate and graduate students.

History faculty members are engaged in three distinct but interrelated activities: 1) contributing to the growth of historical understanding and knowledge within the university, the state of Utah, nationally, and internationally through original research and the dissemination of research results by publication, paper presentations, and other forms of professional activity; 2) striving for excellence at all levels of the curriculum from introductory lower-division survey courses to graduate seminars; 3) serving the department, the university, the profession, and the community. The department embodies "a vitally important disciplinary perspective that involves the relationship of the past to the present and the future...that historians can bring ... to bear on the public debates of our time in a variety of contexts and forums."

The department offers BA, MA, MS, and PhD degrees, with a strong emphasis in the graduate program toward US History and the American West. History Department faculty contribute to the university's General Education mission and participate extensively through research, teaching, and service in many interdisciplinary programs across the College of Humanities and the university.

Several centers and programs are associated with the Department of History or its faculty, including the Asia Center, the Latin America Center, the American West Center, the Division of Gender Studies, the Middle East Center, the Religious Studies Program, and the Obert C. and Grace A. Tanner Humanities Center. Faculty and students regularly participate in seminar series offered by centers and programs, faculty cross-list courses with Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies, seven faculty members are affiliated with the Asia Center and the Latin America Center, and two faculty members have shared appointments with Gender Studies. Taken overall, the department's ongoing relationships with these various centers, divisions, and programs bolster its academic and research goals.

Since its last review, the department has undertaken a strategic planning process, now part of the College of Humanities "Roadmap," which identified five primary goals: 1) recruit a diverse student body; 2) decrease time to graduation at all levels; 3) increase research productivity; 4) provide students with marketable skills; 5) support nontraditional research and teaching initiatives such as public history, community-engaged scholarship, and digital humanities, and revise RPT standards accordingly. External reviewers were very enthusiastic about the Roadmap, but found it unclear how much momentum each of the goals of the Roadmap carries and to what degree they have the full support of the department faculty. The document was not included in the external review packet, and is not always perfectly aligned with the department's self-study. While the external reviewers worried that the Roadmap had already been set aside, the chair affirms that the Roadmap has been (and is) serving to guide priorities in the department.

Recently the department made significant changes to the undergraduate curriculum (effective for the 2017-18 academic year) by reducing the number of required credit hours and increasing the flexibility in upper-division courses needed to complete the major. At the graduate level, a new Certificate in Public History has been developed and is awaiting final approval from the university's Board of Trustees. These are positive developments. A current proposal to create a new Center for Historical Research within the department as an umbrella for faculty research initiatives has a strong group of advocates but does not appear to be supported by a majority of department faculty.

Between the loss of majors and challenges with department leadership, the department faculty are "frazzled and stressed" (in the words of the department self-study), a sentiment generally echoed by faculty who met with the external review committee. In sum, while the Department of History has significant strengths and many positive achievements, there is also much work to do in determining sustainable priorities and effective governance for the future.

Faculty

The department currently has 25 tenure-line faculty (two with joint appointments), plus two current tenure-line searches and two full-time career-line faculty. The department also employs four staff members (2 at .75 FTE).

The internal review emphasized gender parity, and that the proportional balance among men and women among the tenured and tenure-track faculty has improved measurably with the department's newest hires after the 2008 budget crisis. Ethnic and racial diversity, however, and growth in faculty hires for subject fields outside the department's traditional strengths continues to advance slowly. External reviewers consider the two newest hires, one each in Latino/a and African-American history, to be promising developments, though further stressing that the department will need to work attentively to retain these promising young professors and scholars through carefully managed mentorship and encouragement for them to advance their research agendas.

An additional positive step for diversifying the faculty is evident in the position launched this year for a Pacific Islander historian; the search was nearly completed at the time the external review committee visited the department. The position is designed (and was advertised) with a strong expectation for community outreach to service the Pacific Islander population in Utah (especially in Salt Lake City). In this case, concerns were raised by a number of faculty regarding the expectations that the person filling the position would have to meet for tenure; i.e., how the public history and community outreach component would be evaluated for tenure and promotion purposes. These concerns should be addressed quickly.

The department has struggled with leadership since the last review. Although faculty are supportive of the current chair, there is significant dissatisfaction with the decision-making processes within the department. The department is run by the chair and the associate chair, whose primary responsibility relates to scheduling and class assignments. There is also an executive committee, made up of three elected faculty members, one each from the ranks of assistant, associate, and full professors, with the associate chair and graduate director sitting as ex officio members. The influence of the executive committee, however, is limited to two prescribed roles: approving faculty travel requests and allocating merit raises for faculty. All other decision-making processes (e.g., strategic planning, curriculum reform) are evidently handled by ad hoc committees. Faculty report that volunteers for such roles are often not forthcoming. Additionally, few full

professors are willing to serve as department chair. For the 2017-18 academic year, the current chair will serve a second year in an interim capacity. There is discussion of the need to bring in an external chair through a new faculty appointment in the future.

Interviews by the external reviewers revealed a strong sense that many associates have "stalled" at rank, a conclusion supported by departmental data. Among associate professors, the most recent PhD was 2001; the average associate professor earned a PhD in 1993, and the median earned a PhD in 1997. The external review recommends university and department leaders take steps to rectify this problem through extended leave for associate professors. Associate professors have often served as center directors at the expense of their own research. The external reviewers recommend extension of one-year, full-salary sabbaticals to associate professors who have been center directors, with the submission of a research and publishing plan, and that other associate professors be offered extra leave time through course releases or supplemented sabbaticals.

Students

Undergraduate Students

The number of undergraduate History majors, as well as overall enrollment in the undergraduate program, has declined significantly in recent years, while the graduate program has fluctuated, but mostly held steady since the previous review in 2010.

The university's Office of Budget and Institutional Analysis (OBIA) shows the decline in the number of History majors from 312 in 2010 to 155 in 2016. Gender diversity decreased from 41% female to 35% female during this time period, though this category fluctuates too much to conclude this is a trend. Hispanic/Latino students increased from 3.2% in 2010 to 12.9% in 2016, but other areas of ethnic diversity have too few students to compute anything significant. As assessed in the self-study, given the appreciable growth in Latino/a students in the University of Utah student body, more room for improved diversity remains.

The undergraduate students are pleased with the department in general. Internal reviewers noted that students specifically praised: 1) the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) and the opportunity to present at conferences, 2) the outstanding academic advising they receive, 3) the high value of the course The Historian's Craft, and 4) the flexibility offered by the new curriculum requirements. Students did cite a number of concerns. These included: 1) the impact of faculty leaves on course offerings; 2) classes that cover so much material that discussion and in-depth independent research are hampered; 3) the need for a better sense of community among students; 4) the lack of a faculty advisor for the History Student Advisory Committee (H-SAC); 5) the focus of the department Instagram account on the faculty and not students; and 6) the amount of curriculum dedicated to American History over other regions of the world (e.g., Soviet/Russia).

The department primarily attributes the decline in majors to the growth in STEM and Business majors following the Great Recession in 2009. Not surprisingly this trend has caused tension given that the SCH productivity model is being replaced by one based on majors, enrollment, and graduation rates. However, the new budget model also means that the college can buffer the impact of declining enrollments on departments.

Recruitment efforts include attending events inside (e.g., Major Expo, Welcome Week) and outside (e.g., SLCC and local high schools) the university. Competitive scholarships and tuition benefits are also employed in recruiting and retaining students. Despite the decline in majors, the undergraduate program is characterized in the self-study as lively and includes the H-SAC and Phi Alpha Theta, the professional society for history students, though the H-SAC has very little participation among current students (the H-SAC has one student member at present). The faculty are actively involved in increasing student diversity, and new faculty hires may aid in this regard both as role models and through local outreach.

The internal reviewers noted that since the downturn in enrollment, there has been pressure on the Academic Advisors to do outreach to high schools and to recruit more majors, which they consider outside their scope of practice. The internal reviewers suggest that recruitment by faculty and current students is more likely to be effective than outreach.

The internal reviewers had several recommendations to recruit and retain undergraduate students: 1) articulate how the History curriculum results in learning and skills that not only lead to enriched lives but can also translate to a wide variety of future career possibilities; 2) work with students and H-SAC to build an undergraduate major community; 3) allow junior faculty to develop new courses along thematic lines that may appeal to a more diverse student body (including women); and 4) facilitate more internship opportunities for undergraduate History students. The department indicated a strong desire to increase the number of internships for its students. External reviewers suggest there may be a need for an additional staff member to serve as an outreach and internship coordinator.

Graduate Students

The number of History graduate students has held steady between 44-57 from 2010 to 2016. Gender diversity ranged between 39% female and 58% female, with no clear trends. The graduate student body has grown slightly more diverse since 2010 with a decline from 84% to 80% white. Still, ethnic diversity is low with Hispanic/Latino (3), American Indian (1), multi-racial (1) represented. The department is actively engaged in recruiting a diverse group of graduate students both from within their undergraduate program and nationally.

Graduate students appear very pleased with the department and its core strengths. Their concerns, relayed to internal reviewers, include: 1) the decline in the Middle East History faculty and course offerings; 2) the graduate stipends relative to the rising cost of living; 3) the limited communication with the department (i.e., it is primarily via the graduate advisor); and 4) limited access to the kitchen.

Curriculum

The department's recent changes to the undergraduate curriculum (effective for the 2017-18 academic year), reducing the number of required credit hours and increasing the flexibility in upper-division courses needed to complete the major, are significant. The new Certificate in Public History awaiting final approval from the university's Board of Trustees is another positive development.

The Department of History offers a major and minor in History and History Teaching. The History major requires three 1000-level courses, four 2000-3000-level courses, and seven upper-division electives totaling 42 credits. Students are free to choose from a topical, thematic, or chronological area of focus,

although this is not required. The History minor requires two lower-division courses and four upper-division courses totaling 18 credits, while the History Teaching minor requires 27 credits. While many of the department courses are offered online, the department does not envision a fully-online degree offering in the future.

At the graduate level, History offers PhD, MA, and MS degrees. The PhD degree is targeted at students who wish to pursue a career in academia; the MA is designed for students who wish to continue on to the PhD or a career in research, publication, or college teaching; the MS degree is intended for students pursuing a career in secondary education, the military, government, archives, and libraries. The PhD program only accepts students in fields of US History and European History, with a particular emphasis on the American West. Students in the MA and MS programs can pursue all fields covered by the department.

In the last seven years, the department conferred 73 undergraduate degrees, 10 master's degrees, and 2.6 PhD degrees per year on average. A highlight of the program is the department's annual Practicing History Conference, where students and faculty gather to present their research. Undergraduate students have the opportunity to pursue internships with community partners, and graduate students have the opportunity to pursue a teaching assistantship through the department or a research assistantship through the funded centers that History faculty direct. Some students may also work on funded projects for government agencies.

Program Effectiveness and Outcomes Assessment

In 2008, the department began collaborating in a statewide "History Tuning" project, which established learning objectives for the discipline as a whole. The learning objectives fall into three categories: historical knowledge, historical thinking, and historical skills, which are further subdivided into four to eight specific outcomes. Faculty members identify a small subset of these outcomes for each course they teach. However, there does not appear to be a system to ensure that the curriculum as a whole addresses each of the individual outcomes.

Direct assessment of the undergraduate program is conducted through two core courses: HIST 3100, The Historian's Craft, and HIST 4990, a senior seminar in which students exercise the skills, knowledge, and thinking they have developed over their careers in the department. Students participating in the department review indicated that they found HIST 3100 extremely valuable and emphasized how important it is for majors to enroll in this course as early as possible in their studies. So, although this course is considered a mid-program assessment, the department may soon find that it no longer functions that way, as more students choose to enroll in the class toward the beginning of their careers. The same students suggested that the heavy emphasis in the curriculum on content knowledge meant they had less time than they would have liked to conduct research into the topics of their choosing. Thus, their capstone research had to be circumscribed by specific coursework they had already undertaken. Students suggested that there might be one additional skills-based class or an independent research project class added between HIST 3100 and 4990 so that students would have the time to conduct the preliminary research they need in order to successfully complete 4990. Students also complete a senior exit survey with questions based on learning outcomes.

Drawing on student surveys following HIST 3100, 4990, and the senior exit surveys, along with student evaluations, student discussions with the academic advisor, and discussions with faculty who have taught these courses, faculty have worked to adjust the course so that it better serves the needs of the students and accomplishes the desired learning outcomes. The department reports that this has resulted in improved student work produced in the capstone courses and better evaluations in the exit interviews. Conversations are ongoing about adjusting the capstone experience to make it more flexible and to (perhaps) connect it to an internship if students desire this experience.

At this time, the department does not appear to have a clear map of its complete assessment cycle, but it has made progress in this direction since the previous review.

Graduate degree completion data from 2009-10 to 2015-16 indicates that rates of completion among master's degree students has increased overall, from about 63% in 2009-10 to 78% in 2014-15. Although the total number of undergraduate majors and pre-majors has declined precipitously since 2012, from 309 to 155, according to the department self-study, the percent of the student body completing bachelor's degrees has not similarly declined. In fact, graduation rates appear to have risen overall since 2009.

Except for PhDs, there does not appear to be a system in place to track the employment status of alumni. The job market for PhDs in history is "troubled," as indicated in the department's self-study. In 2014-5, there were half as many jobs listed for historians as there had been PhDs conferred in 2013-14. However, the department has limited the number of doctoral students it admits to the number it can fund with fellowships and assistantships. Between 2009 and 2015, they awarded 16 PhDs. Almost all of them are currently employed as historians or in related fields. Given this rate of employment, it would appear that the PhD program is meeting its learning outcome goals. The department is also focusing more attention on helping its students pursue alternate career paths with their PhDs, particularly through the Public History Certificate and the department's ongoing engagement with the American West Center, which offers hands-on experience to students of history who engage in internships or research assistantships here.

Facilities and Resources

The Department of History is housed in the 50,000-square-foot Carolyn Tanner Irish Humanities Building, which opened in 2008. It shares the building with the Tanner Humanities Center and the Department of Philosophy. Faculty members have private offices in the building that are somewhat larger than the minimum size mandated by the State. An administrative suite houses the department's four staff members as well as the chair. There is also a kitchen available for use by faculty and staff, and there is a graduate student lounge that has recently added a computer and printing station. The department has one seminar room that it schedules, and occasionally faculty are able to teach in other seminar rooms in the building. The two lecture halls in the building are also occasionally available for history courses. It should be noted that the public restrooms in the building are not all ADA accessible, a surprising oversight given the year in which the building was constructed.

The department indicates some concern regarding the uncertain impact of the university's new budget model. Currently, the department's operating budget relies heavily on "productivity funding." Given recent declines in department enrollment and majors (two of the three legs of the budget-model "stool"), these concerns seem justified. Teaching assistantships are funded with productivity money, as are faculty and graduate student travel, department supplies, and computers, among other things. Most worrisome is the fact

that a substantial percentage of the staff salaries are funded with productivity money. All this being said, despite declining enrollments and the new funding model, the department continues to operate in the black.

Department coffers also contain substantial capital. External reviewers suggest the department could use its surplus funding -- stored away over the years -- to enable faculty at all ranks to begin or complete research agendas. External reviewers suggest some of these funds could be used for associate professor fellowships (perhaps through course releases bought by the History Department, supplemented with more sabbatical funds from the dean's office); seed grants for new projects and completion of grants needed to finish off a book or article; or providing some foundational support for the Center for Historical Studies.

COMMENDATIONS

1. Reviewers found that previous strategic planning efforts (e.g., the Roadmap) produced thoughtful, nuanced and innovative strategies and solutions for addressing trenchant issues related to curricular design, faculty and staff development, faculty and student recruitment and retention, and faculty governance.
2. Faculty continue to be productive, make substantial contributions to scholarship in the field, and have been nationally recognized.
3. The department has taken successful initial steps in curricular reform, including the Graduate Certificate in Public History; the revised, more flexible requirements for the undergraduate major; and the creation of the core undergraduate course, The Historian's Craft.
4. Department faculty brought in large Title VI National Resource Center grants to the Center for Asian Studies and the Center for Latin American Studies, which benefit the department, college and university.
5. The department maintains relationships, often in leadership positions, with various centers and programs across the university, which bring substantial benefit to the academic mission of the department.
6. Since the last review, the department has achieved a balanced faculty gender ratio and made gains in the number of faculty from other underrepresented groups. Ongoing focus and discussion related to increasing diversity, and recognition of the need for continued and transparent dialogue, represent commitment in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The department should develop written by-laws and policies that describe department decision making and administrative processes, including spousal appointment policies. Other ways to strengthen their governance would be to have a regular forum for faculty to discuss curriculum, planning, and policy and to allow the executive committee to make broader, more substantive input into departmental issues.
2. The department is encouraged to seek ways to create a robust and collaborative intellectual community. Mechanisms to do so could include moving forward with plans for the Center for Historical Research, strategically deploying departmental funds, and targeting support (such as extended sabbatical leaves) to bolster career momentum of associate professors, particularly those who have served as center directors. Updated RPT guidelines that encompass developments in the discipline are also essential.
3. Continue to develop better ways to recruit and retain both graduate and undergraduate students. Attracting and graduating more undergraduate students and infusing more research-informed content with more opportunities to engage in research and scholarship at the undergraduate level would increase a student pool with an interest in graduate level work. Beyond this, however, attracting the best and brightest graduate (PhD) students requires expanding funding and support and investing in graduate student research development opportunities.
4. The department should build on recent hiring successes with a continued effort to improve diversity at both the faculty and student levels, employing institutional resources and best practices.
5. The department could use additional staff support (3.5 FTE at the time of the review). Moreover, staff should be involved in planning efforts underway and should have more opportunity for professional development.

Internal reviewers summarize that while "...the Department of History has significant strengths and many positive achievements, there is also much work to do in determining sustainable priorities and effective governance for the future."

Submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Graduate Council:

Richard R. Paine (Chair)
Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology

Kristin G. Cloyes
Associate Professor, College of Nursing

Christine A. Jones (Undergraduate Council Representative)
Associate Professor, Department of World Languages and Cultures

College Name
College of Humanities

Department Name
History

Program
All

Faculty Headcount

		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
With Doctoral Degrees Including MFA and Other Terminal Degrees	Full-Time Tenured Faculty	23	23	23	22	22	22	20
	Full-Time Tenure Track	1	2	3	3	3	4	4
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	3	2	2	3	3	3	2
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track	1	1	1	2	1	1	2
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	1	1	2	1	2	2	0
	Total	29	29	31	31	31	32	28
With Masters Degrees	Full-Time Tenured Faculty							
	Full-Time Tenure Track	0	0	0	1	2	1	1
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track							
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Total	0	1	1	2	3	2	2
With Bachelor Degrees	Full-Time Tenured Faculty							
	Full-Time Tenure Track							
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track							
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Total							
Total Headcount Faculty	Full-Time Tenured Faculty	23	23	23	22	22	22	20
	Full-Time Tenure Track	1	2	3	4	5	5	5
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	3	2	2	3	3	3	2
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track	1	1	1	2	1	1	2
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	1	2	3	2	3	3	1
	Total	29	30	32	33	34	34	30

Cost Study

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Direct Instructional Expenditures	2,514,947	2,669,744	2,815,987	2,906,917	2,875,737	2,664,259	2,586,013
Cost Per Student FTE	5,141	5,463	5,383	6,489	7,327	6,649	7,398

FTE from Cost Study

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Full-Time	57	44	50	28	24	25	18
Part-Time	1	2	3	1	2	2	1
Teaching Assistants	1	2	1	2	2	3	2

Funding

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Total Grants	0	0	0	0	7,511	35,553	13,348
State Appropriated Funds	1,934,816	2,089,536	2,149,680	2,221,333	2,403,005	2,274,317	2,255,530
Teaching Grants							
Special Legislative Appropriation							

Differential Tuition

Student Credit Hours and FTE

		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
SCH	Lower Division	8,379	8,643	9,579	7,548	6,924	7,284	6,984
	Upper Division	5,039	4,777	4,847	4,820	3,861	3,779	2,793
	Basic Graduate	382	363	371	244	210	240	137
	Advanced Graduate	456	464	474	470	450	399	336
FTE	Lower Division	279	288	319	252	231	243	233
	Upper Division	168	159	162	161	129	126	93
	Basic Graduate	19	18	19	12	11	12	7
	Advanced Graduate	23	23	24	24	23	20	17
FTE/FTE	LD FTE per Total Faculty FTE	5	6	6	8	9	8	11
	UD FTE per Total Faculty FTE	3	3	3	5	5	4	4
	BG FTE per Total Faculty FTE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AG FTE per Total Faculty FTE	0	0	0	1	1	1	1

Enrolled Majors

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Undergraduate Pre-Majors	37	43	32	31	17	15	16
Undergraduate Majors	240	257	268	231	191	153	145
Enrolled in Masters Program	39	29	25	24	20	24	19
Enrolled in Doctoral Program	24	25	29	27	27	25	27
Enrolled in First-Professional Program							

Degrees Awarded

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Undergraduate Certificate							
Graduate Certificate							
Bachelors	96	61	71	79	71	59	45
Masters	9	11	7	15	10	6	12
Doctorate	2	1	2	1	4	4	1
First-Professional							



Memorandum of Understanding Department of History Graduate Council Review 2016-17

This memorandum of understanding is a summary of decisions reached at a wrap-up meeting on February 5, 2018, and concludes the Graduate Council Review of the Department of History. Ruth V. Watkins, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Stuart K. Culver and Barry L. Weller, Co-Interim Deans of the College of Humanities; Eric A. Hinderaker, Chair of the Department of History; Benjamin Cohen, Incoming Chair of the Department of History; David B. Kieda, Dean of the Graduate School; and Katharine S. Ullman, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, were present.

The discussion centered on but was not limited to the recommendations contained in the review summary report presented to the Graduate Council on November 27, 2017. The working group agreed to endorse the following actions:

Recommendation 1: The department should develop written by-laws and policies that describe department decision making and administrative processes, including spousal appointment policies. Other ways to strengthen their governance would be to have a regular forum for faculty to discuss curriculum, planning, and policy and to allow the executive committee to make broader, more substantive input into departmental issues.

New by-laws were crafted by the Department and adopted a week before this meeting. Incoming Chair Cohen is also working on a guidance document specifically for spousal colleagues, which is an area that lacks clear articulation of responsibilities, here and elsewhere. It is difficult for the Department to have detailed spousal appointment policies because each situation is a unique set of circumstances and not always confined within departmental boundaries. An overarching constraint, however, is the Department's more recent strategic focus on research-oriented instruction and their dedication to expose students to tenure-line faculty in introductory courses, leaving much less need for career-line lecturers. Even with consistency on this point, accommodating spouses during the hiring process is a broad need and SVP Watkins feels it is an appropriate time to have a campus-wide conversation on the topic of University support of dual career partner recruitment. She will raise this at the Council of Academic Deans, with an aim to assess points such as whether support should be focused on tenure-track roles and what the best financial model is.

In response to other aspects of this recommendation, the Department's executive committee has now begun meeting monthly in advance of regular faculty meetings. This is a positive step forward and should help streamline meeting agendas, allowing for full but focused discussion. Dean Kieda also noted that the executive committee can also be useful in the summer if a critical decision needs to be made at a time when the faculty in its entirety is unable to meet. Opportunities to discuss the shared vision and aspirations for the Department are also important. While faculty meetings are an important forum, we concurred that additional settings are also needed, and this is discussed under Recommendation #2.

Recommendation 2. The department is encouraged to seek ways to create a robust and collaborative intellectual community. Mechanisms to do so could include moving forward with plans for the Center for Historical Research, strategically deploying departmental funds, and targeting support (such as extended sabbatical leaves) to bolster career momentum of associate professors, particularly those who have served as center directors. Updated RPT guidelines that encompass developments in the discipline are also essential.

Forums that enhance interactions among Department colleagues and give an opportunity for peer input and for conversations around common disciplinary interests would bolster a cohesive and collaborative intellectual community. While a Center for Historical Research has been proposed as one way to organize such an initiative, Dean Kieda clarified that official centers at the University of Utah cannot be department-specific. That said, this should not deter faculty from mobilizing without this particular structure. For instance, it would be a great benefit to have a committee charged with seeking ways to promote interactions, potentially organizing a seminar series with internal and external speakers and opportunities to 'workshop' projects in progress, including opportunities for graduate students. Deans Culver and Weller suggested that some activities could be centered around expanding use of the digital laboratory and more generally building on the alliance with the Marriott Library. Already, community building changes are underway with the Wilson lecture being expanded into a multi-day event that blends local and external speakers. Complementing these types of forums, the Chair's response letter also mentioned mechanisms to support innovative team-teaching projects, which seems like another excellent approach to promoting opportunities for cross-talk and collaboration, in concert with achieving curricular goals.

The Department has had the unusual circumstance of having many of its members serve as center directors and program directors. This has the benefit of developing strong ties to these interdisciplinary communities, but also presents challenges both to the Department, with less faculty time devoted to core departmental efforts, and to individuals, who may find that administrative duties impede their scholarly pursuits. Chair Hinderaker outlined many mechanisms in place to support faculty who need additional time or resources to ramp up their research due to a stretch of administrative service or for other reasons. Maintaining these mechanisms, in conjunction with the forums mentioned above, should provide the opportunity needed to recharge career momentum. Updating RPT guidelines was seen as an important need by reviewers as the discipline develops in new directions. These changes are underway. The goal is

to have updated guidelines by the end of this academic year, although Chair Hinderaker noted the challenge of finding language that encompasses the full spectrum of research accomplishments fairly. Deployment of departmental funds was not discussed at the meeting, but the Chair noted in a previous written response that these funds are partially committed to recruitment packages; however, to the extent available, they are being used to enhance support for faculty research and travel, as well as to support graduate students and targeted departmental expenses. This deployment of funds seems consistent with the priorities that emerged in the review process.

Recommendation 3. Continue to develop better ways to recruit and retain both graduate and undergraduate students. Attracting and graduating more undergraduate students and infusing more research-informed content with more opportunities to engage in research and scholarship at the undergraduate level would increase a student pool with an interest in graduate level work. Beyond this, however, attracting the best and brightest graduate (PhD) students requires expanding funding and support and investing in graduate student research development opportunities.

A multi-pronged approach is being taken to invigorate undergraduate curriculum. Actions include placing tenure-line faculty in survey classes, creating the Historian's Craft course to add research dimension, and integrating the younger faculty cohort into undergraduate coursework. A lot of credit was given to these new faculty members for their ability to attract students and keep them moving forward. Revitalizing the HSAC and the History honor society has also created a better sense of community among undergraduates. Future initiatives will further bolster these positive steps. The group discussed improving connections with International Studies, partnership with Salt Lake Community College, and the prime opportunity to seek Mellon Foundation support for some of these initiatives.

As for the focus on recruiting and retaining graduate students, the Department has been strategic in terms of restricting the size of master's and PhD cohorts. They are also taking a proactive approach to widen awareness of the range of careers possible with this training. To this end, the Department has participated in the second phase of the Career Diversity Initiative developed by the American Historical Association (AHA). They now hope to participate in the third phase, which involves sponsoring a student as a Career Diversity Scholar. SVP Watkins encouraged writing a request for funds to match AHA resources for this position into the College budget request. We also discussed the possibility of finding ways to synergize with other departments – particularly English—in these career-focused efforts. While the tight focus of the graduate program is strategic, the best size for these cohorts will need to be continually evaluated in years to come, in the context of funding available and expanded career possibilities. The impact of changes to both undergraduate and graduate programs should be periodically reviewed to assess the efficacy of these initiatives and work towards continuous improvement.

Recommendation 4. The department should build on recent hiring successes with a continued effort to improve diversity at both the faculty and student levels, employing institutional resources and best practices.

The Department has been thinking a lot about a roadmap for filling positions with the goal of building a 21st century department that has both field diversity as well as being a community that includes racially and ethnically underrepresented scholars. Among the subdisciplines, there is interest in hiring in Middle Eastern and sub-Saharan African history, but chronological coverage is also important. Chair Hinderaker has established a Diversity Committee, which is looking at a range of issues, from student to faculty, and will be meeting with Kathryn Stockton, AVP for Equity and Diversity. This will provide important groundwork for recruiting, and the Department also recognizes the importance of a supportive mentoring community to faculty retention. Future updates to the Graduate School should include assessment of recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students.

Recommendation 5. The department could use additional staff support (3.5 FTE at the time of the review). Moreover, staff should be involved in planning efforts underway and should have more opportunity for professional development.

The Department has responded to this recommendation by converting two part-time positions to full-time, although they note the need to have hard money allocated for this purpose in the long run. They also concur on the importance of professional development and endorse those opportunities. There is a sense that staff in the History Department are feeling better integrated and that there are strong lines of communication between faculty and staff. Seeking staff feedback on this point, as well as continually looking for ways to promote staff success and convey appreciation, will be important to maintaining an optimal situation. In a broader context, Chair Hinderaker noted that staff at the University in general seem like an underappreciated and in many cases underpaid group. Looking at these issues (and the linked issue of family leave policy for staff) at an institutional level would be beneficial, although many policies may be dictated at the level of the State and therefore not under the administration's purview to change.

The Department has risen to address many challenges and is making many positive contributions to the University. A transition to a new chair has been well-planned. Their thoughtful consideration of the recommendations that emerged from the Graduate Council review, and their strategic planning, have put the History department on an excellent track forward.

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This memorandum of understanding is to be followed by regular letters of progress, upon request of the Graduate School, from the Chair of the Department of History. Letters will be submitted until all of the actions described in the preceding paragraphs have been completed. In addition, a three-year follow-up meeting may be scheduled during AY 2019-20 to discuss progress made in addressing the review recommendations.

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