



UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN  
GREEN BAY

Date: April 24, 2014

To: Cliff Ganyard, Chair History

From: Scott Furlong, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Re: Report on the History Program Review

UW-Green Bay's History program has a talented, productive, and in many cases, internationally known faculty. The program's connection to the interdisciplinary units (Humanistic Studies and Democracy and Justice Studies) strengthens its curricular offerings. The program has had some significant turnover since its last program review due to retirements, resignations and people moving into administration. In addition, due to the quality of their faculty, some of them have been successful in obtaining sabbaticals and other fellowship opportunities that have removed some faculty the classroom on occasion. The faculty continues to be strong scholars and effective teachers the classroom (for example, Professor Greg Aldrete was named Wisconsin Professor of the Year, and Professor David Voelker is a leader in SoTL work in History). Students have become more involved in internship opportunities. There are potentially new developments in the area of digital humanities and more connection with Voyager Magazine. The Center for History and Social Change continues to play an important role in stimulating intellectual discourse across campus.

#### **Enrollment Trends/Resource Issues:**

Enrollments within the History major and minor have decreased quite significantly since the last program review in 2007. As an example, declared majors in 2008 were at 177 and in 2012 they stood at 132. The program review and the AAC also note that the percentage of females majoring in History has declined to 36%. Both trends are not unique for UW-Green Bay. Further analysis and data collection found that History majors were decreasing generally and that females were underrepresented. Yet, these are issues that History addresses within the program review and understands that that they would like to see improvements. It is possible that the recent need to rebuild their faculty since the last review has contributed to these numbers. In terms of the representation of females, the report notes that while all faculty address gender issues within their classes only one history faculty member (Kim Reilly) is a member of the Women and Gender Studies faculty.

While there has been turnover within the History faculty, the good news is that the program has been able to run successful searches to find replacements. These new faculty are adding different perspectives and interests to the curriculum and developing very well (two will receive tenure in 2014). The report notes an increasing issue of students doing internships and a need to assign someone from History, rather than relying on the coordinators from HUS or DJS to supervise these experiences.

360° OF LEARNING

**Assessment:**

The History program recently revised its learning outcomes (Spring 2013). The major change to these outcomes is to emphasize historical skills more so than content. There is a sense within the program that these outcomes better reflect what the faculty want to emphasize to students. By their own admission the History faculty have struggled with assessment and have continued debate about it. A concern about a decline in student skills led the faculty to engage in a discussion about learning outcomes and how to assess them. History currently uses its senior capstone course (History 480) as the point to assess its majors. They do this by writing an overall performance of the students in the course. There are other areas where several faculty are working to develop additional assessment methods. It is clear that the assessment in the past couple of years have led to action by the History faculty in that they have changed their learning outcomes to better reflect their program. They are also in discussions to develop a History Methods course that would be required prior to students moving into the upper level curriculum.

The AAC notes that it appears that the program does not have a “viable assessment model in place.” I would agree that some additional work is needed here, but feel that the program is moving in the right direction particularly over the past couple of years. The History 480 class provides the opportunity to conduct an assessment of majors, but the faculty teaching this course needs to ensure that the assessment being done links back to the learning outcomes that they developed. Additional direct and indirect methods could be added to this process if necessary. For example, the program does quite a few internships, and they could choose to evaluate learning outcomes in this activity. As noted, the program is making changes based on the assessment data that they have collected to date, and are “closing the loop.”

The alumni survey data had some information that the History program may want to consider. In a number of questions, the responses from the History program were less than the overall UWGB numbers and this was so in areas that I would expect History to excel. For example, Written Communication Skills, Public Speaking and Presentation, Reading Skills, and Listening Skills. In addition, the results in the “Educational Experiences” section may need some discussion by the faculty. For example, the “recommend UWGB to a co-worker, friend, or family member” result is quite a bit lower compared to the overall UWGB population. It is unclear from the data, what is going on with these students, but they seem less satisfied with their overall educational experience.

It is clear that History is producing strong graduates as evidenced by the examples provided in their self-study.

**Curriculum Development/General Education:**

The AAC notes a concern regarding the lack of faculty with an expertise in world history and/or areas such as Africa, Asia, or the Middle East (i.e., nonwestern). History recognizes this concern and a number of faculty are attempting to fill this gap by teaching classes that focus on nonwestern areas. This became an issue partially due to the interdisciplinary nature of our curriculum. When DJS shifted their focus, they hired a historian whose specialty was not world history in order to fill needs with the interdisciplinary program. It is an area of concern and something that the History faculty need to consider in the event a position becomes available.

As noted earlier, History is in the process of developing a new course on History Method, which will be an important addition to the curriculum. They have also added other courses focused on the specialties of their newer faculty.

History is very involved in teaching general education with a number of courses counting in the Humanities breadth area as well as others in the Ethnic Studies and World Culture areas.

In summary, the History program has been in a bit of a rebuilding mode due to some retirements, resignations, and movement of faculty into administrative roles. The faculty continue to be very productive and some have garnered national and international recognition. The newer faculty, including those most recently hired, are establishing their own research agendas and are innovative in the classroom. Since the last program review, there has been a significant drop in the number of majors in the program. While similar to that national trend, it is something that the faculty need to pay some attention to, as well as the decreasing number of females majoring in History. The program is moving in the right direction in regards to assessment but need to continue their diligence in this area and continue to work with the Provost Special Assistant on this.

Cc: Dean Von Dras, Academic Affairs Council  
Andrew Kersten, Associate Provost