

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

**ACADEMIC SENATE**

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

**REPORT TO**

**THE ACADEMIC SENATE**

**AP-008-234**

**Program Review for BA, History**

**Academic Programs Committee**

**Date: 01/24/2024**

**Executive Committee  
Received and Forwarded**

**Date: 03/27/2024**

**Academic Senate**

**Date: 04/10/2024**  
**First Reading**  
**04/24/2024**  
**Second Reading**

## BACKGROUND:

As part of the University's planning cycle for academic programs, a self-study was completed by the History Department for the BA in History for 2017-2022. The previous self-study, conducted in 2014, did not go through an external review process and the History Department's last full program review was in 1999. An external review team, consisting of Dr. Kenneth Marcus from the University of La Verne and Dr. Miriam Raub Vivian from California State University, Bakersfield, met with the department virtually on March 6, 2023, and visited the department in person on March 13, 2023. After their visit, a report was prepared and submitted by the external reviewers, after which both the Department and Dean prepared responses and the department formulated short- and long-term priorities. The AP Committee has reviewed the recommendations, responses, and the department's action plan.

## RESOURCES CONSULTED:

Dr. Daniel Lewis, Chair, History Department

Dr. Camille Johnson, Dean, College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences

## DISCUSSION and RECOMMENDATION:

The external reviewers were very positive in their appraisal of the BA History program. Strengths that were highlighted in the external review included student enthusiasm, faculty expertise, collegiality of tenure track faculty, course offerings that are diverse and cohesive in their sequence, incorporation of key PolyX courses and digital history requirement in the curriculum, as well as a streamlined program that facilitates timely graduation.

The external reviewers also listed challenges faced by the History BA program, including limitations in subject area coverage, a shortage of full-time tenure track faculty (due to faculty retirement without hire of new faculty), heavy workloads for lecturers without compensation for services, limited mentorship/integration of lecturers, and little office space with as many as 3 or 4 lecturers per office. The department's ability to hire more instructors has been greatly impacted by contraction of GE Area C and D, which has resulted in lost revenue and therefore a shortage of funds for hiring. Other challenges noted by the reviewers were limited access to alumni, insufficient technological support for classroom issues which include problems with smart classrooms and function of podiums, and limited student internship experiences (most of the students are pre-credential students who work on pre-professional activities).

To build and sustain a strong, student-centered program, the external reviewers made the following recommendations:

1. Hire more tenure-track faculty – this will alleviate lecturer workload and allow for offering of more subjects.
2. Inclusion of history practicum for students to gain hands on internship experience.

3. Cultivate leadership within the department for sustainability. Suggestion to have a “Vice Chair” who can observe during the current Chair’s tenure and continue once the current chair’s term ends.
4. Additional support for the History Department office (student assistant)
5. History is a relatively large department and should not be subjected to the same cuts as other departments in CLASS. It is a “workhorse” for the college.
6. Establish regular source of funding for student research projects.
7. Address lecturer concerns about heavy enrollments and provide greater mentorship for them.
8. Dependent on future hires – consider developing a “Public History” emphasis degree.
9. Provide assigned time to the Social Science Coordinator who advises most history majors (pre-credential).
10. Begin tracking careers of alumni to better tailor program for student needs.

The department met and devised an action plan which is divided into short-term and long-term priorities. In the short term, the department will focus on the following categories: faculty hires, staff (office space), learning assessment, and curriculum (developing student research skills and engagement, development of hybrid courses to increase FTES). Long term priorities are in the areas of faculty (hires, departmental advising), learning assessment (internships with financial support; addressing equity gaps), and curriculum (addressing GE program revision). The short- and long-term priorities are well-articulated. Administrative support is needed especially for faculty hires and alleviation of office space congestion.

The Academic Programs Committee commends the History Department on their dedication and commitment to streamlining the BA program and for the thorough and thoughtful review of their program that highlights pertinent issues for their department, college, and the university.