

External Review Summary Sheet for Program Review

Degree/Major: History MA Program Date of Review: April/May 2019
 Reviewer 1: Dr. Nicole Gilbertson Institution: UC Irvine
 Reviewer 2: Dr. Mark Wild Institution: CSU Los Angeles

Please rate the following program review criteria using the following:

E = Exemplary	S = Satisfactory	N = Needs Improvement	U = Unclear	N/A = Not Applicable
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Review based on Self-Study

Section 1 – Introduction (Criteria to Consider)	Evaluation
Has the program listed their mission and goals and provided a relationship to those of the College and University.	E
Has the program reviewed the recommendation from their past program review. Based on the recommendation has the program implemented changes that have resulted in improvements?	N/A program has been revised substantially since the last review

Section 2 – Program Description (Criteria to Consider)	Evaluation
The curriculum <i>content</i> is appropriate to the level and purpose of the program and reflective of current debates, trends, technologies, and latest important developments in the discipline. In addition, is the program making the appropriate curricular changes?	E
Are the general education, service learning, honors and or other service courses appropriate to the program?	N/A
If the program has bottleneck courses, do they provide an analysis and plan on how they will address these courses?	N/A
Curriculum Offering: Does the program have adequate course offerings over the past several years for the degree programs.	E

Section 3 – Program Assessment (Criteria to Consider)	Evaluation
The listed student learning outcomes (SLOs) reflect the most important skills, knowledge, and values of the discipline/profession.	E
Curriculum Map: The <i>design</i> of the curriculum supports student achievement of the SLOs. The curriculum offers the required depth and breadth of study, flow and sequencing of courses with coherence, and ample culminating opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of SLOs.	S
Program has an assessment process where they collect and analyze evidence that shows students are achieving the stated SLOs.	E
The program assess the SLO and uses the results to make program, curricular and pedagogical changes (close the loop).	N/A program is too new to assess properly

Section 4 – Program Quality (Criteria to Consider)	Evaluation
Faculty competencies/credentials are appropriate for the discipline and degree (need resumes).	E
Teaching quality is adequately assessed (e.g. computer-generated discipline averages of course evaluations, teaching awards).	N/A program is too new to assess properly
Fulltime faculty are adequately supported and engaged in ongoing professional development necessary for staying current in their field and continuously updating their courses/curriculum.	S
Fulltime faculty are engaged in service to the department, college and university.	E
Fulltime faculty are engaged in research, scholarship and or creative activity.	E
The program provides adequate opportunities for extra-curricular involvement, internships, practice, professional development, and/or field experiences, as appropriate for students.	S
The program provide clear evidence of the accomplishments of their graduates through the number of graduates employed in a field, number in graduate schools and or numbers passing licensing exams.	N/A program too new
The program makes use of evidence obtained from student/alumni/employers for its	N/A

improvements and goals.	program too new
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Section 5 – Resources (Criteria to Consider)	Evaluation
Admission Trends: number of inquiries, applications, deposits, and enrollment indicate program health and increasing student selectivity is provided.	S
Retention and graduation rates are consistent with disciplinary standards. The program proposes effective strategies to improve in these areas as appropriate.	E
Retention and graduation rates for underrepresented students, Pell Grant recipients, women and first generation students are comparable to those of the overall program. The program proposes effective strategies to improve in these areas as appropriate.	N/A need more information
The program adequately address faculty resources, retirement projections, plans for hiring new faculty, and trends in numbers of faculty by gender and ethnicity.	S

<p>Program Strengths based on Self-Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capable and committed faculty ■ A cohesive curriculum tailored to program objectives that is unique to the region and aligns to the mission of the University ■ The new emphasis on digital humanities for the program ■ Cohort model provides students with opportunities to collaborate and learn from one another ■ High graduation rate (95% after three years)

<p>Program Opportunities based on Self-Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a hiring plan that preserves the department’s strength in world history and addresses the disjuncture between predominately senior-level world faculty and predominately junior level US faculty ■ Develop a plan to balance administrative and teaching obligations for faculty and provide mentorship for junior faculty ■ Develop a plan to increase applicants with the goal of tailoring the student population to program objectives or grow the program ■ To review the course content of all graduate-level courses to align to the goals of the program ■ To continue to develop and refine digital humanities curriculum ■ Establish an award for outstanding graduate student

Additional Comments based on the Self-Study:

Review based on Site Visit

Curriculum of the Program - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
Extended Course Syllabi: Outline course learning outcomes that are appropriate to the level of the course and degree awarded.	S
<p>Do you recommend any changes to enhance the curriculum (content, currency, design, relevance, courses ability) based on the self-study and site visit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider making the Graduate Methods a required course ■ Provide supported opportunities for students to develop group projects with oral component ■ Develop a plan for the Contemporary Historiography course to better reflect the needs of current and future K-12 secondary history teachers 	

Instruction in the program - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
Students are provided with sufficient experiences with the equipment and technologies that will prepare them for success after graduation.	E
Faculty specialties correspond to program needs and to the concentrations in which they teach.	E
The system for evaluating teaching practices facilitates continuous improvement of teaching and learning throughout the program and encourages pedagogy that fosters curricular diversity and inclusive learning environments.	N/A inclusive learning environments were not explicitly addressed
<p>Do you have any recommendation on the teaching/instruction within the program based on the self-study and site visit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ As an opportunity for students to learn pedagogical skills, faculty can better articulate their instructional choices as a way to model their expertise to their students 	

Student Experience – Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
Students feel that support services, staff and administration are adequate and supportive.	E
Students receive the kind of advising they need from faculty to improve their chance for success.	E
Students are satisfied with the overall quality of their learning experience and feel adequately supported through the curriculum to graduation.	S
Students are aware of program requirements and SLOs.	E
<p>Do you recommend any changes to improve student experiences and the learning environment based on the self-study and site visit? If so, please explain and advise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Students explicitly articulated that they want more opportunities to collaborate with and learn from one another to capitalize on the different backgrounds and experiences that they each bring to the program ■ Students expressed a desire for more opportunities to develop their oral communication skills ■ Promote affordable course materials and clarify distinctions between required and recommended texts ■ Continue to test efficacy of various curricular innovations, particularly those related to online research. The department will need some time to figure out what works best for their students. 	

Faculty - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
Tenure and Promotion: Guidelines are updated regularly and establish a high standard for tenure and promotion.	N/A guidelines not provided
<p>Do you recommend any changes to improve faculty tenure and promotion considerations based on the self-study and site visit? If so, please explain and advise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage mentoring of junior faculty, both respect to teaching in the MA program and more generally, to ensure promotion. ■ Obligations of the Graduate Program Advisor may require more than one course release given the requirements of the position. 	

Assessment of Student Learning – Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
Based on your review of student work samples, the educational effectiveness evaluation plan, and annual learning outcomes assessment reports; the program regularly and effectively uses assessment findings to improve student learning.	E
<p>Do you recommend faculty changes to enhance program quality and student learning based on the self-study and site visit? If so, please explain and advise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The department has a variety of modes to assess student learning and experience, from exams to exit interviews and student evaluations. We have no recommendation to improve these data 	

points.

Facilities - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
The program has adequate facilities for teaching, research and scholarship.	N
The equipment within the laboratory is adequate	N/A
<p>Do you recommend facility changes to enhance program quality and student learning based on the self-study and site visit? If so, please explain and advise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The current classroom reserved for seminars is inadequate. Student learning would be enhanced if department had access to a conventional seminar room that could seat 18-20 students and has windows. ■ Research component of program would benefit from access to a computer lab or, even better, a tech room (combined classroom with moveable computer workstations) 	

Diversity and Climate - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
Students feel that the learning environment in the program is inclusive and that diversity is valued.	E
Faculty feel that the working environment in the program is inclusive and that diversity is valued.	E

Overall - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
The goals and proposed changes are appropriate to the latest developments in the discipline and responsive to the program's most important needs.	E
The program's website and marketing material are accurate	S
<p>What are the strengths of the program?</p> <p>Our analysis of the program reiterates the strengths identified in the self study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capable and committed faculty ■ A cohesive curriculum tailored to program objectives that is unique to the region and aligns to the mission of the University ■ The new emphasis on digital humanities for the program ■ Cohort model provides students with opportunities to collaborate and learn from one another ■ High graduation rate (95% after three years) 	
<p>What are the weaknesses of the program?</p>	

This is a quick summary of our recommendations that could strengthen the program.

- Develop a hiring plan that preserves the department's strength in world history and addresses the disjuncture between predominately senior-level world faculty and predominately junior level US faculty
- Develop a plan to balance administrative and teaching obligations for faculty and provide mentorship for junior faculty
- Develop a plan to increase applicants with the goal of tailoring the student population to program objectives or grow the program
- To review the course content of all graduate-level courses to align to the goals of the program
- To continue to develop and refine digital humanities curriculum
- Establish an award for outstanding graduate student

What are the top three goals that you would suggest that the program set for the next five years?

1. Develop a hiring and retention plan to support current and future faculty to meet the evolving needs of the program
2. To review the methods, historiography, and digital humanities courses to better meet program goals and support student preparation for secondary teaching in K-12 history
3. Secure adequate classroom facilities

Additional Recommendation for Programs:

Final Report

Overview

The Master of Arts program in the history department at Cal Poly Pomona is aimed at future and current history teachers in California's middle schools and high schools. The specificity of the program is unique to the region. It focuses on working with current and future teachers to increase their knowledge of history content and methods, which benefit the MA students as they continue to develop as professionals in their field. The coursework requires MA students to participate in readings seminars in United States history and World History. These topics align to content standards and allow the MA students to engage in coursework that will directly inform their instruction. Students are responsible for leading the seminar, which provides them opportunities to reinforce the learning of the content and to facilitate instruction in the content.

In addition, the revised program contains a new emphasis on digital humanities, in the form of digital research seminars initiated this current academic year 2018-2019 and that will continue to be developed. Students have opportunities to engage in methods that provide them with training in the digital humanities as well as have time to consider how this can align with the current trend of technology integration in local school districts. This course also allows students to engage in historical research and writing, thus offering them to develop more expertise in "doing" history, the experiential learning that is relevant as they teach historical writing to their middle school and high school students. Through these courses, the MA program allows students to receive rigorous training aligned to the needs of California's history teachers. The curricular form follows the intended function. The US/World structure reflects the framework for middle/high school teaching assignments. The digital humanities emphasis points towards

classroom applications. We strongly support this emphasis. The strategy of stringing this emphasis across the curriculum, rather than creating a distinct class/sequence, helps to integrate it into the program objectives, and offers multiple points of entry for students to understand how digital humanities can be used to enhance K-12 instruction. Assigning responsibility for digital humanities instruction across the faculty will inevitably lead to some unevenness in implementation, in particular because the content of digital humanities is diverse and in a rapidly evolving stage of adolescence. But the department, through its formal assessment process and informal culture, seems well-equipped to undertake the process of reflection and adjustment necessary to strengthen this component of the program.

The MA program has many strengths that support student learning and success. The eight faculty who teach in the program have strong scholarly records, which include 21 published books and 50 scholarly articles between them. Their research, leadership, and public service have been recognized through awards, grants, and fellowships. Discussions with the faculty and current students highlight the faculty's strong commitment to student success. In student evaluations of program quality, students gave strong scores for instructor expertise and enthusiasm, opinions they reiterated when we met with them on campus. Students commented that the faculty are caring, available, and flexible. Students feel that the faculty want to make the program relevant for each student.

The students with whom we met, both current students and alumni, were engaged and enthusiastic about the program. They also seemed to work well together; we detected a culture of respect and cooperation among them. This speaks to the cohort model of the program, where each incoming group of students enrolls in a shared set of courses and are all focused on history teaching. The cohort model provides students with the support they need to develop close relationships that allow them to learn from each other during the time in the program. By prioritizing community building, the faculty structures the program with a student-centered approach that emphasizes shared experience and collaboration. This is reflected in an impressive graduation rate of 95% after three years. In both the self-study and the site visit, it is clear that the students are enthusiastic about their participation in the program. Students form an effective community of scholars through the cohort model, which was evident in interviews and the student evaluations of program. Students were interested in learning both from faculty and from each other.

Recommendations for the Department

This is a young MA program, which is just completing a period of transition (spanning both its reconstitution and semester conversion) this year. We expect it will take some time for faculty and students to adjust to the new program, for faculty to build out the curricular innovations put in place, and for enough students to finish the program to allow for effective assessment. We do have some recommendations which we believe will aid the process.

a. Staffing/Hiring/Mentoring

As indicated in the self-study, the department should develop a hiring plan that anticipates current and future staffing needs for the MA program. The department's current roster of tenured/tenure-track faculty seems adequate to achieve the objectives of the MA program, though there are some gaps in coverage. MA programs designed to prepare students for doctoral programs or other specialized careers can sometimes choose areas of specialty, but a program such as this one, dedicated to preparing teachers who will be leading classes on both US and World History, needs broad coverage of all regions and time periods. A historian of Africa, for instance, is needed (and may have been approved). The department should prepare a hiring plan that addresses these present and future

needs, and anticipates potential retirements. The department is well aware of one imbalance—many of the world history specialists are relatively senior, while the US specialists are relatively junior. This imbalance creates a potential problem for mentorship, both for teaching within the MA program and more generally. The department's collegial and collaborative culture may mitigate some of the potential problems here, but its members should still take care that current and future junior department members are not left without adequate guidance in their teaching and career development. This is particularly important for the faculty member who now serves as the teacher preparation liaison at the undergraduate level, and who is slated to join the team teaching at the MA level.

b. Curricular Matters

In the History Department's Program Review Self-Study, they compiled student evaluation of graduate seminars since 2013 with all the courses ranked highly. However, there were areas marked for improvement (page 22) with the weakest scores for the Contemporary Historiography and the Graduate History Methods course. Given this data, the qualitative feedback, and our observations, these are our recommendations to enhance these two offerings:

While the Graduate Methods course is not required, the reviewers ask the faculty to consider whether this course should be required if it is considered the foundational course for the program. As described, this course sets the context for the cohort and is the first course that each student in the cohort for each academic year enrolls in. Given the significance of this for the cohort model, it seems that it might be made a requirement for the program. The course outcomes require students to do research using primary and secondary sources and culminate in a research paper and presentation. Giving students an opportunity to do graduate research is important for obtaining a MA degree. However, students have as their occupational goal to become or improve their K-12 history teaching, and given this context it may better align with the students' professional goals to reconsider the outcomes of this course. Given that the new Framework guiding history-social science instruction in California is organized through an inquiry-based model, allowing students to practice developing inquiry questions and using primary and secondary sources to answer these may be a useful activity. This may or may not require a full research paper and could offer students opportunities for research and historical writing. Students also suggested that they want opportunities for developing outputs that are more collaborative, such as group projects. However, they recognized that they are all working professionals so need structure to guide these outputs, such as models and specificity that breaks down the workload into manageable steps. Guided structure was something that the students valued in this course as they transition from undergraduate coursework to graduate level.

The history department also offers the Contemporary Historiography course to provide students with opportunities to learn about current trends in the field of history. Courses that allow students to deepen their knowledge of topics and methods in history will support students to gain expertise in the field. Offering other topics relevant for California's history teachers, such as a course on the History of Education or California History will also address the same goals and provide students with cutting edge research and content that can be translated to their classroom experience.

The curriculum for the MA program is intended to prepare the students to become or improve their knowledge of history (its content and methods) for teaching in K-12. Students also need to translate the knowledge gained in these courses into their middle and high school history classrooms. The students who were interviewed commended the professors who taught the content through engaging pedagogical models using strategies that they could replicate in the K-12 classroom. Faculty discussion of intentional

pedagogical and content choices for their own teaching at the undergraduate (and graduate) level could be further articulated as a component of the course, particularly in the Reading Seminars. Given the history faculty's expertise in content-area instruction, they have given deep thought to the construction and teaching of courses and making this thinking visible could inform the students in the MA program and allow them to improve their own curricular design.

The self-study mentions that in the curriculum program outcomes student respondents rated the development of oral communication skills lower than other components of the program and is seen by the students as an area for improvement (page 33). Given that students develop close connections through the cohort model, the faculty might consider how to leverage these relationships to develop group projects that include an oral communication component. By sharing the work through a collaborative effort, this may lesson student affect and increase confidence and skills around oral communication through a group dynamic. Student participation would provide them with skills that align to the student learning outcomes for the program.

c. Student Success/Inclusivity

In general, we were impressed with the inclusive culture of the department and the program. During the site interview with current students and the outing with alumni, a student from each group mentioned the financial challenge of purchases course texts. Some ways that students suggested that the financial costs could be lessened was to give the reading list ahead of time so students could identify the most cost-effective form of purchasing the texts or have time to find the texts at other libraries. Students also appreciated when the faculty assigned readings that were digitized and available open source. Students suggested that instructors highlight the readings that are mandatory and which are optional or that will be limited so that they can make the appropriate decisions about which texts they should purchase for their courses. We encourage the department to be mindful of this issue and of any additional issues pertaining to equity and inclusion. We did not see much attention devoted to these concerns in the self-study.

Recommendations for the College/University

To support the history department as it develops its MA program, the university could consider the following.

a. Facilities

The department would be greatly aided in its effort to promote digital humanities, and in its instructional efforts more generally, if the university could provide classroom space suitable for its needs. A hybrid classroom/computer lab equipped with computers, perhaps with some movable modules, would work perfectly for this kind of instruction would suffice. Such rooms are becoming increasingly common at universities, and can be used by other departments for similar type of work. A room of this type might even provide some opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration if other departments have students working on similar types of projects.

On a more basic level, the department desperately needs a conventional seminar room that can seat 12-15 students comfortably around a table. The classroom where we met students (which we were told is the standard room assigned for MA courses), a narrow windowless room that seemed like a converted utility closet, was not at all conducive to good learning. It's a testament to the department and its students that they seemed able to produce good outcomes in such an unsuitable space. A more appropriate seminar room would offer a simple and effective benefit to the department.


b. General Support


We encourage the University to leverage existing resources to promote the MA Program in History, particularly among local schools and teachers. This includes supporting and funding the development of marketing efforts to increase the graduate program's visibility and recruitment. It may also include collaboration with the School of Education to promote joint efforts at recruitment. With increased outreach efforts, the department can have the opportunity to grow and/or to select for the kind of students (working teachers vs. prospective teachers, history BA's vs non-history BA's, etc.) who will best contribute to the program. Running an effective program requires a significant commitment from the Graduate Coordinator, and the university may consider augmenting the release time for this position and/or leveraging other resources in other parts of the university to help manage the work load.

Overall, we were impressed with the program and commend the department for implementing such an innovative and effective program.

Dr. Nicole Gilbertson

Dr. Mark Wild

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Mark Wild