

El Camino College

Office of Instruction

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM REVIEW  
DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM SELF-STUDY REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR:

DEPARTMENT: HISTORY

Submitted by the Self-Study Team

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The following self-study was compiled by the History Department. Members of the team who have completed the work included:

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Instructional Program Review  
History

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## OVERVIEW

The History Department began with the inception of the college in the Fall Semester of 1946. By the Fall Semester of 1950, the Department was offering six basic courses. These courses served three purposes: (1) they fulfilled the American History and Institutions' requirements for graduation; (2) they could transfer as undergraduate lower division history courses to any accredited institution; and (3) they could serve as elective courses in the Social Sciences and Humanities. By the Fall of 1968, the variety of courses offered by the History Department had expanded to include fourteen. The growth of the History Department has kept pace with, and reflected, both the expansion and the contraction of the College as a whole over time. By 1969, there were nineteen full-time professors in the Department. As of today, there are six full-time historians in addition to seven adjunct professors offering fourteen courses in forty-seven sections. Through the years, there have also been a variety of professional developments serving to enhance the effectiveness of the Department. These developments include (1) a program of independent studies arranged on an individual basis with a mentoring faculty member; (2) instructional television courses supervised and graded by members of the Department; (3) Honors History courses making up part of the transfer program to the University of California at Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, and Irvine, the University of Southern California, California State University at Dominguez Hills, Pepperdine University, and Pomona College; and (4) a system of guest lecturers from both off campus and from the Department which, at one historical juncture, served as "laboratory sections" for certain history courses. As of this writing, the "laboratory section" lectures have been deactivated.

This initial report for program review is based upon conditions within the History Department for the academic year 2004-2005. This is a good time to gauge the overall functioning of our Department. The recent historical period of the Department had been one of great change for both the administrative and teaching staffs, and that period has now appeared to reach an end. The Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences, of which the History Department is a part, has settled under the leadership of Dr. Gloria Miranda, herself a professional historian. The relatively small permanent staff of History faculty (six as of this writing) will soon gain an additional full-time historian as a Search Committee finalizes a decision later this semester. Due to the efforts of both Dean Miranda and Dr. Emily Rader of the History Department, a survey was administered to three hundred seventy-three students who were enrolled in fourteen history courses in the fall semester of 2004. The results of this survey are included in the index to this report.

It is gratifying to learn from the aforementioned student survey that 79.0 % of the students surveyed felt that the history courses they have taken or are currently enrolled in are proving to be either "excellent" or "very good." In addition, 61.0% of said students stated that they were so satisfied with the history courses that they had taken that they planned to enroll in further history course work in our Department. Each professor in our Department was personally consulted and asked to evaluate his or her courses in terms of seating capacity and actual enrollment in pertinent courses. In addition, the research addressed the number of full-time equivalent students, or *FTEs*, along with class retention rates, weekly student contact hours per full-time equivalent faculty, or *WSCH/FTE*, along with enrollment by age and number of average hours per week that said students were employed. From the perspective of the History faculty, the following overall recommendations have been proposed:

1. Due to faculty concern regarding less than adequately prepared students in an academic sense, there is a recommendation that there be developed a far closer and intimate relationship with some of the various academic skills programs available on our campus. In particular, the Writing Center should focus more upon a direct servicing of our students with respect to their writing requirements in our Department's courses. Here clearer points of contact are needed between our Department and the Writing Center staff, who should be more sensitive to the particular writing demands characterizing the assignments and examinations administered by Department faculty.
2. There is a very strong and unanimous Department desire for improved physical facilities in which to both teach and maintain an office. Adequately equipped classrooms are vital to the mission of teaching, while adequately equipped and professional offices are vital to both student-professor interaction and the latter's need for a place to study so as to be as current and lucid as possible in one's area of teaching specialization. Faculty are in need of better lighting for their offices, newer technologies for the classrooms, e.g. LCD projectors and wireless multimedia, and even for mats that cover wires that often stretch throughout our classrooms. In addition, there is a need for new lecture podiums, tables/chairs that fit together properly, maps that are accessible to both those faculty who are below average in height and who are disabled, cleaner student and faculty bathrooms, the monitoring of graffiti on Social Science and Art Building stairwells and elevators, and carpets and windows that are cleaned on a regular basis. The frequent failure of elevators to operate properly in both the Social Science and Art Buildings preclude the use of those buildings beyond the first floor for both student and faculty who are disabled. This is not only immoral, it is clearly illegal under various federal and state laws designed to ensure access to the disabled to public buildings such as those at our college.
3. With respect to institutional policies regarding student discipline and grievance procedures, the Department is in unanimous agreement that the policies as set forth in the College Catalog is the foundation for the resolution of said discipline and grievance matters. In addition, the Department unanimously agrees that faculty – and faculty alone – should maintain control over all add/drop matters so as to avoid the undermining of faculty authority in the classroom and over the instructional process in general. The Department also calls for a closer relationship with some of the programs designed to serve students on our campus. Among these is the Writing Center, which is viewed by the members of the Department as not serving the needs of our students with particular demands in our courses. All too often the staff at the Writing Center refuses to address specific writing concerns peculiar to history essays. Accordingly, the Department recommends that there be clearer points of contact in that program in particular so as to have staff prepared to service the writing problems typically faced by lower-division students in our history courses.

## CRITERION ONE: PROGRAM INTEGRITY

### 1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

The historical mission of El Camino College, as refined on pages one and two of the 2004-2005 Catalog, is to:

Offer comprehensive educational opportunities designed to address the needs of the students who want to continue their education at the community college level. The college is rooted in the community it serves in Los Angeles County, and strives to meet the diverse communities that pursue educational and cultural programs at the college. The goal in the broadest sense is to expand the learning experiences of our students, to develop their potentialities, and to enable them to become productive and successful individuals.

The History Department confidently presents its course offerings as a fulfillment of the aforementioned goals. The community is made aware of the requirements and nature of each of the History Department's course offerings via (1) the annual El Camino College Catalog; (2) the schedule of classes promulgated each semester; (3) flyers posted in kiosks and bulletin boards throughout the campus; (4) and occasional articles in local newspapers and in flyers posted in local libraries. In addition to the above, each professor in every course presents a syllabus on the first day of class which elaborates upon the general course descriptions through a description of the individual historian's version of the course being taught and outlining his or her course requirements.

### 2. *What are the greatest strengths of the program?*

The consensus of the Department indicates that the particular strength of the program resides in the variety of courses that are offered to meet the requirements in the various categories of academic and transfer demand. The expertise of the faculty is a strong complement to this variety. The History faculty takes particular pride in the offering of history courses that pay sufficient attention to gender, ethnic, class, and transnational issues.

The general academic goals of the History Department can be summarized as follows:

- (1) to provide an intellectual grasp of the history of past human events through a multitude of courses that treat of them, via either a topical or chronological approach or some combination thereof.
- (2) to stimulate the students' analytical comprehension of causal relationships in temporal space, thereby enhancing their understanding of the role played by

sequence – and chance – in human affairs.

- (3) to provide survey course knowledge of global, national, American, and ethnic civilizations.
- (4) to give necessary historical information concerning institutions, events, and personalities of the American past so as to provide the necessary background for an informed public.
- (5) to familiarize the student with the varieties of human experience over short and long periods of time.
- (6) to provide a forum for the discussion of national and international issues which are anchored in the past but have contemporary manifestations.

3. *What can we, as a Department, recommend to improve our program?*

- (1) create a larger number and greater variety of faculty symposia on history-based topics which will be open to the public.
- (2) hire additional faculty in areas and fields in which the Department is currently suffering a weakness or absence.
- (3) disseminate information to the public about speakers addressing issues raised in in our courses and to make connections between these issues and wider local, regional, national, and global realities.
- (4) create an alliance program of Department historians to offer guest lectures for high schools in the areas that the College serves.

## CRITERION TWO: INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

The El Camino College History Department provides a great variety of course offerings that are assured transferability to other institutions of higher learning. In the college catalogue and in the schedule of classes, equivalencies of lower division courses taught at our College are provided and pointed out for the University of California and the California State University systems. Though several U.S. history courses fulfill the American history requirements, the most attended of all Department courses are the basic surveys: History 1A and 1B. Sometimes referred to as “the basic bread and butter courses of our Department, they account in their many sections for a little over two-thirds of all course offerings in the Department annually. Using the Fall of 2004 as a standard for comparison, these courses account for 51.94% of all history courses offered. This is generally consistent with the findings of the last Program Review, in which we discover that this figure was 52.0%. History 3 and History 4 are equivalent to world and Western civilization courses at transfer institutions. Grade distribution for all history courses in the Fall semester of 2004 was as follows: 21.8% A; 23.6% B; 16.7% C; 4.8 % D; and 14.0% F. In addition, research reveals that CR accounted for 0.0%; I accounted for 0.8%, and W accounted for 18.3%. Finally, NC totaled 0.0%. The retention rate for this same period was 80.9%. This placed the Department slightly above the total Division rate of 80.5%. Research for this period also reveals that the overwhelmingly largest age group in Department courses was 18-24 years of age, for a percentage of 75.41. The second largest age group was slightly older (25-29 years of age). This second group comprised 9.12% of students enrolled in Department courses. Students under the age of 18 made up 1.66% of the total Department student population. Students between the ages of 30 and 39 totaled 10.22%, while students aged 40 through 60 and above totaled 3.59%. Students still in high school made up 1.10% of the total Department student population. 98.33 of all of the Department students had received a high school or equivalency diploma.

2. *What are the strengths of the program?*

The greatest strength of the Department’s program is its faculty. The professionalism and personal devotion of the historians in this Department have kept a quality program functioning despite the cutbacks in funding and personnel over its recent history. The program has also maintained high standards despite the wider problems all too evident in the historical profession, e.g. a lack of career opportunities both in terms of initial placement and in often well-deserved career mobility for those historians who have secured full-time professional work. Full-time members of our Department have often managed to sustain research and writing activities that are an integral part of an historian’s role in society – despite a total lack of institutional support and recognition in a material sense, e.g. release time to pursue such research and writing, research fundings, serious compensation for academic conference attendance (including those who are

giving papers), merit pay, etc. In addition, Department historians often teach very large classes, which stands in stark contrast to neighboring community and four-year institutions in which identical courses often have fewer than half of the students normally enrolled in an El Camino College history course. Despite these institutional shortcomings, Department historians have maintained a variety of courses at convenient times for a wide number of students. Fall 2004 research reveals that Department students rate Department courses as "excellent" (31.97%); "very good" (46.99%), and "average" (20.49). A mere 0.55% rated our courses as "poor." Additionally, 61.46% planned to take additional history courses. Along with the full complement of transferable lower division courses in the fundamental history fields, the Department continues to offer courses not normally found in typical community college catalogues. Examples here include History 25, a course in modern German history; History 11, a survey course of Russian/Soviet, and post-Soviet history; American Studies 7, a course in the history of American popular culture; and History 5A/5B, survey courses in early and recent British history. Courses such as these not only serve transfer, major, and general education needs, but in addition, they foster interest and intellectual depth in the Social Sciences. It should also be said that such courses offer a wider range of electives for the student body in general, along with providing a service to the South Bay community that we serve, as such courses offer students opportunities for personal development that would otherwise not be there.

3. *What can we recommend to improve the Department's program?*

Members of the Department have – and continue to make – great strides in the incorporation of innovative teaching techniques designed to reach as broad a student population as possible. These techniques include the integration of collaborative and technological methodologies designed to engage our students intellectually. The retirement and resignation of a number of Department historians over the last ten years has facilitated the spread of such innovations as the resistance to such innovations has essentially vanished in the Department. Despite this positive historical development, the Department as a whole would like to see a greater use of tutorial systems that could help in particular with first-generation college students. Here, there is a need to utilize the College's Supplemental Instruction Program. Further, Department members agree that additional courses in Asian American, Chinese, and Latin American history are all warranted. In addition, a number of historians have expressed interest in increasing the number of interdisciplinary courses offered. Ideally, such courses could draw upon scholars from different areas of the campus and the Division, e.g. economists and historians teaching courses on the economic history of the United States, etc. Overall, however, faculty members appear to be satisfied with the condition of the Department of History as it is currently constituted.

### CRITERION THREE: INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND THE PROGRAM'S LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

The History Department does not administer placement tests for aptitude or proficiency in its subject for incoming students. The Department thus relies upon the general college student orientation program and the professional services of counselors as the primary means of instructional support. The annual catalogue and the semester schedule of classes list as the only prerequisites for taking history classes as follows: "Recommended Preparation: eligibility for English 1A." Institutional research for the Fall of 2004 reveals that 92.49% of our students in Department courses have either completed English 1A or are eligible to enroll in this course. Conversely, 7.51% of Department students have *neither* completed English 1A or are eligible to enroll in it. Pertinent here is yet another institutional research finding for this same time period. 87.17% of all Department students stated that they were in fact aware of this recommendation when registering for Department courses, while 12.83% *were not*. Institutional research for this same period also reveals that slightly less than half – or 46.73% of all students enrolled in our history courses – felt that their courses were an important part of their preparation for future work. Given the general cultural emphasis upon immediacy and present-mindedness; a general societal view that degrades appreciation for the importance and relevancy of historical thinking, this is an astoundingly high percentage. This percentage looks even greater in its significance when placed within the context of a two-year college setting that does not allow for the numbers of kinds of history majors typically seen in larger, four-year institutions.

On another note, it must be acknowledged that there is no organized system for orientation assessment, counseling, and advisement referrals or for student follow-up studies by Institutional Research. Accordingly, the bulk of student support is left up the discretion of the individual historian. Despite this institutional shortcoming, individual historians formally tell their students on the first day of class what academic requirements constitute their course. It is also not uncommon during office hours that such historians tell their students how a particular course satisfies a particular academic/institutional requirement, be it at El Camino College or elsewhere. In the event of a particular Department member's lack of knowledge in such matters, it is also not uncommon to refer the student in question to professional counselors whose job it is to be able to answer such queries. It is common for Department members to inform students on the first day of class what classroom decorum is expected. Here rules for behavior predicated upon rights and responsibilities as outlined in the college catalog are made as clear as possible. Each professor is aware of the "early alert" system, and all Department historians utilize this system in one form or another. In other words, our students who are

failing are informed of this in a timely manner, thus enabling the student in question to decide whether or not to continue in the course. Extended Opportunity Programs, Special Resources, and the Veterans Office all periodically check with our historians to see whether students under their respective jurisdictions are making adequate progress. Their requests for grades and records of attendance are consistently and in good faith honored by Department members. In addition to these services, students enrolled in the Honors Transfer Program receive special assistance – including counseling – pursuant to their participation in this program.

Finally, college policies regarding student conduct and grievance procedures are followed. The Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences listens to student complaints based upon situations in which the parties involved prove unable to resolve the conflict themselves.

2. *What are the strengths of the program?*

The clearest strength of our program is the instructional support services offered by Department historians. This typically takes the form of personal counseling and advice given to students both during, and often well beyond, scheduled office hours. I can personally testify to the dedication of all of our historians in this respect. Department members routinely work with students far beyond class and office hours. Some of the historians conduct special review classes on their own time as part of examination preparation. All of the Department members regularly write letters of recommendation for our students. These letters pertain to both transfer applications and to scholarship applications. In addition, our historians write letters of reference for students seeking new employment. An extraordinary amount of time and effort is spent on consulting with students on an individual basis. Professors are also involved in numerous advisory capacities for student clubs, such as the Religions in Dialogue club.

3. *What can we recommend to improve the program?*

As was once the practice, the residence within the Social Science Building of a full-time counselor for the Division. At a minimum, there should be an office within the Social Science Building for “ad hoc” meetings with students by a counselor. In addition, students should be more encouraged to meet on a regular basis with their professors. If such encouragement is not feasible, then it may be necessary to make at least meeting with the historian during the semester a mandatory part of the course. Members of the Department continue to express displeasure, as was expressed in the last Program Review, with an unthinking expansion of student rights that is not balanced with the necessity of student responsibilities. A more reasonable and legally justifiable balance can be more clearly set forth in policies already enunciated in the college’s student handbook. Institutional research reveals that a sizable number of our history students are enrolled in courses that begin at 4 p.m. and afterward. Accordingly, instructional and counseling support services need to be more available for these students than they currently are. In addition, several Department members have argued for years that there needs to be a better use of the week in terms of class schedules. For example, students

have consistently shown a desire to have Sunday classes, which could meet as early as 7:45 a.m. and as late as 6:00 p.m. This requires a reinvestigation of the Weekend College concept. Not only would parking and classroom space be readily available at such times, but in addition, many students would find it easier to arrange their personal lives so as to be available for class, e.g. babysitting availability.

#### CRITERION FOUR: FACULTY AND STAFF

1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

For the fall semester of 2004, the History Department employed six full-time historians. As of this writing, there has been a hiring of a seventh full-time scholar. Varying numbers of adjunct faculty also comprise the Department's staff, changing in number from one semester to the next. Upwards of one-third of all Department courses are typically taught by this temporary pool of adjunct faculty. Along these lines, the historical trend since the last program review is that a minimum of one-half of all the history courses being offered taught by adjunct faculty. This does not have a positive impact on student performance, as adjunct faculty, given the nature of their professional lives, are simply not in a position to devote the same amount of on-campus time to their courses as full-time faculty are. While the recent hiring of a seventh historian does remedy some of this problem, the only extensive solution is the hiring of additional full-time history faculty. In short, we should be striving to attain a 75% full-time 25% part-time ratio.

The hiring process, along with state-mandated periodic evaluation of faculty procedures, are conducted pursuant to state/federal statutes and institutional guidelines and regulations, not to mention custom and tradition dating back to the Department's founding at the time that the college was founded. Relevant here are the regularly scheduled History Department meetings in which historians are consulted by the Dean of the Division. The History faculty is particularly fortunate in this regard, as Dean Miranda is herself a professionally-trained historian. Hence the consultation process is just that – a collegial relationship between professional equals in which the Department feels as if its views are taken seriously, and often acted upon.

2. *What are the strengths of the program?*

There is a general consensus in our Department that the deep strength of this program is the professional commitment of its members. This is measured by both scholarly attainments and by successful teaching. 85.71% of the full-time faculty (including the most recent hire) have the highest earned degree possible in history, a Doctor of Philosophy, a degree that is a minimum of five years of full-time study and writing beyond a master's degree. This percentage includes one department member who is currently completing a doctoral dissertation at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The years involved in the attainment of the highest degree offered by a university is itself a testimony to the commitment of the Department's members. In addition, and despite a relatively heavy

teaching load, Department members maintain an active scholarly life in which papers are published and read at numerous scholarly conferences. Our historians take pride in the courses that are offered. These courses are a direct reflection of the aforementioned active intellectual life, as they tend to be current in terms of recent research and writing in the various fields represented by our courses. Class, gender, and racial/ethnic issues all routinely make their way into Department offerings. So too does intellectual history, political history, and economics and religion. National, regional, and relevant themes are a consistent component in Department courses. In short, our historians exhibit a consistent professionalism, collegiality, dedication, integrity, and sensitivity which makes this a unique Department, one that is easily comparable to many Departments at four-year institutions that are blessed with far more in the way of funding and professional growth opportunities.

An additional comment here about the specific teaching skills of our historians is necessary. Department historians display a wide variety of teaching approaches, ranging from Socratic/Talmudic dialogue to a more extensive use of computer-enhanced technologies. Regardless of the approach, there is an excitement and a zeal that permeates our Department's teaching. It can honestly be said that we do not have an historian who merely "goes through the motions." The dedication that this suggests is self-evident. Such commitment is also expressed in the amount of writing that our Department generally requires. Writing forces students to focus, question, analyze, and see both general patterns and specific exceptions to those patterns. While it would be much easier on individual professors to simply administer standardized "scantrons," such an approach is not in the short or long-term interest of our students, regardless of their ultimate goals. The History Department plays a key role in preparing our students for a lifetime of thoughtful reflection, a habit of mind that will serve them well irrespective of where life takes them.

The intellectual commitments of our Department have not precluded a sustained membership in the various bodies that constitute our College's governance process. Therefore, historians routinely serve on a number of committees, ranging from the Division Council to the Library Purchase Committee. Since the last Program Review, historians can also be found on the College Curriculum Committee, the Sabbatical Leave Committee, and the Honors Transfer Advisory Council.

3. *What can we recommend to improve the program?*

While the Department is pleased with the hiring of a seventh full-time historian this semester, there is no doubt that given the number of students that we serve and the number of sections offered year round, that additional full-time historians would greatly enhance the effectiveness of the program. The hiring of additional full-time faculty would also enable the Department to offer a wider variety of courses than are currently offered. This includes courses in the American Studies Department; courses historically taught by History Department faculty.

In the last Program Review, concern was expressed over the historical pattern of a

Department in which there were few women and minorities. The Department now takes justifiable pride in the fact that with the recent hiring of the aforementioned seventh full-time scholar, the Department has an almost even split of men and women. By the fall semester of 2005, there will be four full-time female historians and three full-time male historians. Coupled with a more socially reflective racial/ethnic composition, the Department has successively remedied the concerns discussed in the Program Review of 1992-1993.

The Department also feels that the following areas are still in need of improvement. The College should find the funds to assist our historians in displaying appropriate historical materials in the halls of the Social Science building. Flex day activities have generally ceased to be of professional use. There should be a greater emphasis upon the formation of sessions that address specific intellectual content, e.g. sessions addressing recent historiography in a particular area of current scholarship. What is the use of talking about an endless series of methodologies when *absolutely no attention is paid to what is being taught?* There is also a general view in the Department that more should be done to encourage professional activities such as giving papers at, and attending, scholarly conferences. Funding currently is largely directed to only those conferences that emphasize technologies. *While technologies are important, so too is content.* And content is only developed when there is a sustained emphasis placed upon the kind of intellectual development that attendance at professional historical conferences represents. Money is needed for this, and its lack is currently inhibiting the fuller development of our Department's professional mastery of the material.

## CRITERION FIVE: LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

### 1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

In quantitative terms, our library does a fine job of maintaining books, scholarly journals, and primary sources such as the *New York Times* on microfilm. Computer terminals also appear to be adequate, given the requirements of our lower-division courses. One should also make mention of qualitative terms: for a two-year college, our library does an outstanding job of maintaining a wide collection of materials that serve a broad cross-section of courses. Approximately twenty to twenty-five percent of our library holdings are in history. These holdings are distributed throughout the broad areas that our Department offers through our courses: early and recent United States history, world history, California history, Mexican history, and Central and South American history. Tens of thousands of books in these areas circulate through our library annually, and the library staff does a consistently wonderful job of orchestrating this enormous flow of information.

The Learning Resource Center located in our college library offers a rich resource for Department learning efforts. Contact with this Center reveals that untold numbers of our history students have availed themselves on a regular basis of the opportunities awaiting them under the direction of very dedicated professional library staff. History tapes, computers, typewriters, VCRs, and microfiche facilities are only some of the services afforded to our history students. Funding and staff losses have not diminished the Center's ability to provide a sustained support system that facilitates the intellectual growth of our history students. Institutional research reveals that almost half of our history students in the fall of 2004 – 46.05% - report using a computer on campus. While this research does not refine this figure further, thus calling into question just how many of this group use Center computers, it is, nonetheless, reasonable to assume that many – if not all – of this percentage utilize computer services in the Library in general and in the Center in particular. However, when asked to speak to Center support for a particular course, only 10.36% stated that the Center's services helped in said course. The question here alluded to the use of Center services in general, which may mean that a particular respondent had in mind the use of Center copiers. Therefore, the 46.05% appears to be undisturbed by the figure of 10.36%.

### 2. *What are the strengths of the program?*

The central location of the library on our campus makes it equally and easily accessible to our history students. Since the last writing of this report, the expansion and modernization of the library has undoubtedly benefited students and faculty alike. There

is no doubt that the library, in both its physicality and in its holdings, is far superior to the libraries at other two-year colleges and arguably equal, if not better, than comparable libraries at four-year colleges that do not feature original research. The computerization of the index card catalogue files has in particular provided a more efficient and sophisticated organization of library holdings. Accordingly, entry into the resources of the library is all that much better.

But such improvements would not be as noteworthy in the absence of first-rate librarians. Several in particular have come to play an extremely important role in the teaching of our history courses. Professors Edward Martinez, Vincent L. Robles, and Claudia Striepe have all come to work very closely with Department historians as the latter send their students to the library to work on a variety of research projects. The recent death of Professor Judith Harris, a longtime librarian who had also worked closely with many Department members, is a loss to the Department that will be felt for some time to come. One of the many services that this fine group of professional librarians has undertaken on behalf of the Department is work with Department Book Selection Committee members. Since the last writing of this Review a number of historians have taken the lead in assuring that our library history holdings are as current as possible, given course demands, faculty research interests, and budget constraints. It is hoped that the administration of this college – outside of our Division – comes to see the centrality of scholarship to the functioning of the college as an academic enterprise, and that the steady acquisition of historical journals and monographs is an integral part of that scholarly integrity. As a result, it is urgently demanded by the History Department that any budget cuts that have been instituted in the library book budget be restored and superseded so as to enable the Department to provide students and faculty with the latest – and best – scholarly work in a variety of historical areas.

3. *What can we recommend to improve the program?*

The aforementioned concluding remark concerning budgets is the perfect entry into this section of the Report. Without a doubt, the issue of library book and journal funding lies at the heart of our Department's recommendation. *Greater funding is needed.* There is much that is contained in recent monographs and scholarly articles, and this material is not necessarily included in computer technologies. There is all too often a mistaken assumption that computers are replacing books. In terms of pertinent scholarly writing outside of generalized textbooks, this is a profoundly erroneous assumption.

Along with the necessity of providing more money so as to buy more books and scholarly journals for the library, there is a need for additional space for meetings between Department faculty and history students. The number of photocopiers remains inadequate, and a larger number would be especially helpful at peak times of use, such as at the end of a semester when the numbers of students using the library grows due to impending due dates for research essays. A more liberal use of library speakers addressing issues such library-based research would be of enormous help, as all too many of our history students remain woefully unprepared out of high school to undertake serious college-level research projects in a college library. Such a speaker program would

be in need of enhanced funding and release time so as to have the time necessary to make such a program successful. Finally, the Department recommends that there be an expansion of library hours in the evenings and on the weekends. Such an expansion should not be restricted to those periods when classes are in session, as our more serious students do not stop studying between semesters. The Department also recommends that there possibly be a library orientation/skills course that is linked with a history course. Here it may be feasible to implement a pilot course as part of the Learning Communities/First Year Experience cohort that could address the necessity of developing student research skills.

The emphasis upon expanded library availability should be seen in the light of the Department's extraordinary skill in success and retention rates, which have been noted in other areas of this report. As revealed in the Appendix to this report, the Department's success and retention rates as of the fall semester of 2005 were nothing short of brilliant – especially when contextualized within the need for expanded library availability. The Department enjoyed a retention rate that semester of just fewer than 78%, and a success rate of just fewer than 86%. In other words, our students were able to attain some of the higher results in the Division despite a relative lack of library availability. More library availability would most certainly translate into even higher retention/success rates.

## CRITERION SIX: PHYSICAL FACILITIES

1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

The Social Sciences Building is a structure that contains eighteen classrooms. Virtually all of our history courses are taught in this building. Since the last writing of this report, a classroom in the Administration Building has been used for some history classes. With one exception, all of the offices of our historians are located in the Social Sciences Building.

A majority of the classrooms in this building are equipped with VCRs featuring monitors situated in easily accessible wooden boxes that are kept locked when not in use. There are VCRs and monitors in storage as well. One of the classrooms in particular – Social Science 212 – is equipped with a laser-disc unit as well. Support for instruction is facilitated through general secretarial offices and administrative offices located on the first floor, a conference room, and a mailroom. In the first-floor equipment storage area there is a terminal and a Data Show Computer System featuring a disk drive, a monitor, and a Logitech Mouse. A printer is also available for use here. This equipment is shared with other Division faculty, and is inventoried on a regular basis. Some VCR/DVD combinations are also available at this time.

2. *What are the strengths of the program?*

There remains an adequate amount of classroom space for our students. In addition, there appears to be a sufficient amount of existing electronic equipment. The physical location of the Social Science Building is ideal, as it is located between the two major auditoriums on campus – the Marsee Auditorium and the “Little Theater.” In addition, large classrooms, such as Art 100 and Music 7, have been used over the years for guest lectures and assorted enrichment programs. Social Science classrooms have received new desks that provide greater comfort for our students, while at least three classrooms have had new lighting systems installed. Needless to say, new lighting has greatly enhanced the learning experience. Most recently, new locks have been installed in the Social Science Building. Their configuration has reduced the numbers of keys that faculty have had to carry, thus making daily work life much easier.

3. *What can we recommend to improve the program?*

Subsequent to the retirement and the resignation of a number of historians since the last writing of this Report, the Department has become a far more collegial environment. This collegiality is expressed through unprecedented consensus among Department members

regarding a number of professional issues of concern to all. Here there is a consensus with respect to the kinds of improvements desirable in our physical facilities. All of our historians agree that better lighting is needed for faculty offices. Poor lighting greatly affects faculty eyesight – for the worse. In addition, Department members all agree that new LCD projectors are needed, along with appropriate wireless multimedia. Wires strewn about the classroom are an obvious invitation to a negligence lawsuit and, more importantly, pose a clear physical threat of harm to those who may trip over said wires. Mats covering such wires would reduce the degree of hazard produced by such wires. The faculty all agree that new lecterns are a necessity, as are classroom tables and chairs that fit together. Some of these classroom tables are unbalanced, so all of the legs need to be repaired so as to make the table even. Maps that are accessible to disabled and shorter faculty are also needed. This is an immediate priority, as many of the classroom maps are placed too high to be of use to disabled and shorter faculty. So-called “smart classrooms” are also desirable. Carpets in both Social Science Building offices and classrooms are often, frankly, filthy, making them a health threat to students and faculty alike. These carpets need to be cleaned and shampooed on a regular basis. The Building does not contain enough bathrooms for either faculty or students. Additional bathrooms are therefore a priority as well. Finally, there has been a growth of graffiti vandalism throughout the building. More policing and prosecution of offenders would go a long way to reducing, if not eliminating, this clear threat to academic order and peace.

Faculty have also expressed an interest in having a fax machine located in the mailroom for use in college-related matters. Finally, a long-standing complaint of Department faculty pertains to classroom windows. These windows, like the Building carpets, are typically filthy and in need of cleaning. The exterior grates on Building windows keep out much sunlight, which would otherwise serve to better illuminate the classrooms to the benefit of students and faculty alike. It should also be added that the air conditioner is often not functioning as it should, making Building classrooms so uncomfortable at certain times of the year that learning and teaching is greatly, and negatively, impacted.

## CRITERION SEVEN: FINANCIAL STABILITY

### 1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

Despite the historical fluctuations in the California state budget that has been evident since the last Program Review writing, the History Department has managed to weather the economic cycles quite successfully. Since that last writing four full-time historians have been added to the Department, a total that includes the most recent hiring that just took place in May of 2005. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the actual total size of the Department has actually declined since that last writing, due to retirements, death, and one resignation. The Department continues to enjoy one of the highest allocations of budgetary resources in the entire Division, a sum that includes the salaries of Department historians. This allocation includes sabbatical payments and paid leaves, but does *not* include monies set aside for conference expenses and similar professional expenses for the faculty.

The administration of the History Department's economic resources is the responsibility of the Division Dean. In this capacity, Dr. Miranda has performed in an exemplary manner, managing to sustain the Department's program at operating levels that enable the Department to achieve its mission in a consistent and professional manner. The Division office is privy to regular updates on budgetary changes that are generated by the College's accounting staff. To a degree, faculty participate in this area of College governance through such mechanisms as the Division Council and regularly scheduled History Department meetings.

### 2. *What are the strengths of the program?*

The History Department continues to generate one of the highest – and historically at certain moments – the highest – WSCH/FTE in the Social Sciences portion of the Division. Here one can discern one of the clearest strengths of the History Department: the willingness of many of our historians (including the adjunct historians) to over-enroll their classes in order to accommodate student and community needs. The rigors of teaching large classes – not mention contractual limitations – place clear limits on how much of this can continue. *The cynical calculation by some of the College administrators outside of this Division is one deeply resented by our historians*, who see College bureaucrats quick to “cite the agreement” but who are, simultaneously, slow to cite it in the area of maximum enrollments. In the wake of Chief Administrator Thomas Fallo's recent salary increase, the resentment evident among our faculty in this area has, if anything,

only deepened.

The financial management of the History program by the Dean has met with consistent approval by the Department. Dr. Miranda has always made an effort to provide funding for faculty who desire to attend scholarly conferences, hire student workers, and engage in projects that advance the learning environment for professors and students alike.

3. *What can we recommend to improve the program?*

A more active partnership between the Department and the rest of the Division should be developed in order to address the issue of fund-raising. The Department should also forge stronger links with local businesses and larger corporations in the area of "public history." Internships could result from this for our students, while monies that are generated could be used for scholarships, building improvements, exhibits, special topics symposia, and exhibits. Greater attention should be paid to federal, state, and private sources of grant monies, though improvements have been made in the acquisition of federal funds.

There needs to be greater advertisement for specialty classes. The lower enrollments typically visible in these classes could be corrected, at least partially, through such advertisements. Responsibility for this effort should not fall solely on the shoulders of our Department. Instead, other areas of the campus -- such as Public Affairs -- should bear far more of the responsibility here.

## CRITERION EIGHT: GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

### 1. *How does the program satisfy the stated criteria?*

As has been argued in previous Program Reviews, the History Department continues to excel in prioritizing objectives. Shared governance, in place since the enactment of AB 1725, has facilitated this achievement of goals and objectives. The Department effectively develops objectives, establishes reachable targets, and, in a general sense, consistently controls the quality of crucial variables serving to contribute to the realization of Departmental goals and objectives. Historians from our Department play a pivotal role in establishing performance targets for both short-range and long-range goals. This is usually accomplished through participation on numerous Division and College-wide committees.

Accordingly, our historians can be found on numerous committees since the writing of the last Program Review. These committees include this Program Review, the Division Conference Committee, the Division Curriculum Committee, the College Equivalency Committee, the College Load Committee, the Sabbatical Leave Committee, and full and part-time Screening Committees for the hiring of historians.

### 2. *What are the strengths of the program?*

The institutionalization of consultation and faculty participation is evident through the existence of the numerous committees alluded to above. The Division Dean has always appeared comfortable about the delegation of authority and the consequent acceptance of collaborative decisions. The relatively small number of historians has served to facilitate the process of personal consultation. The willingness of our historians to serve on these committees is reflective of the extraordinary enthusiasm and positive attitude that has come to create a motivating environment in the History Department. Here our Division secretarial staff has come to play a key role. Without their scheduling, typing, and reminding, much of the collaborative power arising out of the process of consultation would not take place.

### 3. *Recommendations for program improvement*

Our historians have consistently felt that shared governance is more than a phrase when applied to the Department and Division levels. There is a general feeling that Dr. Miranda sincerely engages in collaborate decision-making efforts, and that faculty input is really taken into account. However, this feeling evaporates when the offices of the President,

Vice-Presidents, and the Board of Trustees are taken into account. In these areas, there is a general sense of cynicism, apathy, and at times, outright hostility directed towards students and faculty. Therefore, on the college-wide level, the following suggestions are made:

- a. plebescite votes on important measures on our campus should be administered to all full-time faculty once or even twice per year. Results should be published in a timely and honest manner.
- b. Creation of a Department Chair who functions as an intermediary between the Division Dean and the Department. In order to avoid the bureaucratization of such a position, it should be rotated on an annual basis between tenured Department members, who would receive 20% release time for such service.
- c. Greater integration of the adjunct faculty into Department meetings, policies, and decision-making processes engaged in by the History Department.
- d. Increased appearances by the President and Vice-Presidents at Department and Division meetings in order to discuss concerns of a Department, Division, and campus-wide nature. "Flex Days" should also be more devoted to the discussion and resolution of such concerns.

