

**UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR**  
**UNIVERSITY PROGRAM REVIEW (UPR)**  
**FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT ON: History**  
**UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS**  
January 2023

**Executive Summary of the Cyclical Program Review of the Department of History's Programs**

In accordance with the University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external review and the internal responses of the undergraduate and graduate programs in the Department of History.

In addition to identifying the significant strengths of the programs, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, the report prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation and sets out a plan (including the agent(s) responsible for addressing the recommendations and deadline dates) for follow-through. Timelines for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations are built into the process, with areas reporting mid-cycle on their progress to the Senate Program Development Committee, or earlier where there are significant concerns requiring urgent follow-up.

The Department of History's 2020-2021 Self-Study, submitted to the Office of Quality Assurance on February 16, 2022, included: 1) descriptions and an analysis of the programs, their learning outcomes, curriculum structure, and student experience; 2) information on enrolments as well as financial, physical and human resources; and 3) the program data including the standard data package provided by the Office of Quality Assurance. Appended to the Self-Study were faculty member CVs, the Leddy Library report, course descriptions and syllabi, student satisfaction survey data (NSSE 2020), sample undergraduate student publications, and the prior cyclical program review report.

The Department of History's programs were reviewed by Dr. Jane Nicholas, Department of History, St. Jerome's/University of Waterloo; Dr. Nora Jaffary, Department of History, Concordia University; and Dr. Finney Cherian, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor. In addition to assessing the Self-Study, the Review Team conducted a two-day virtual site visit on April 25-26, 2022, which included viewing a short documentary film by Dr. Palmer which provided a sense of building and classroom space, meeting with faculty, students, administrative and support staff, the Undergraduate and Graduate Committee Chairs, the Head of the Department of History, the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies in the Faculty, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, and the Associate Vice-President, Academic.

In their report (April 29, 2022), the Review Team noted that the program review met the IQAP evaluation criteria and that the programs are consistent with the University of Windsor mission statement and its strategic priority to provide an exceptional and supportive student experience, as evidenced by the quality of faculty teaching and mentorship, the active History Students' Association, the offering of innovative thematic undergraduate courses, the positive and engaging culture within the Department, and the opportunity for producing and publishing undergraduate research in the student-produced journal, *The Great Lakes Journal of Undergraduate History*, which is edited by graduate students. The reviewers confirmed that the admissions are adequate, the program requirements are consistent with the current state of the discipline, and that the teaching and assessment methods (which include compelling and creative assignments) ensure students' attainment of the course learning outcomes and their successful progression through the program. Nevertheless, the Review Team also noted that undergraduate program requirements should be reviewed for greater cohesiveness or to provide a clearer pedagogical rationale for the mix of requirements, to consider greater differentiation between the General and Honours programs beyond completing an additional year of study; and to consider cross-listing fourth-year undergraduate courses with graduate courses to provide more choices to students.

The Review Team noted that the program-level learning outcomes were clear for both the undergraduate and graduate programs, but expressed that they should be reviewed and revised to ensure greater differentiation between General, Honours, and Masters, in order to distinguish the extra skills and experiences that honours

students achieve from those in the general program and to reflect the higher-order thinking expected of graduate students.

The programs are delivered by faculty deeply engaged in teaching, research, and service, and supported by dedicated and collegial staff; all of whom are committed to providing an exceptional student experience. The reviewers recommended reviewing workload distribution and building strong support and mentorship for junior faculty and mid-career faculty to ensure continued active research programs. While the Department was commended for maintaining undergraduate enrolments at a time when others have experienced severe declines, faculty renewal and recruitment support were identified by the Review Team as areas requiring attention, in order to sustain and grow enrolments.

The Head of the Department of History and Dean of the Faculty of Art, Humanities, and Social Sciences submitted their responses to the External Reviewers' Report (April 2022), addressing the recommendations, identifying follow-up actions, and providing clarification or corrections, as appropriate. The Senate Program Development Committee (PDC) Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan (January 2023) considered all the above documentation. The Executive Summary and Implementation Plan, along with any response from the area on the final recommendations, were submitted to Senate in February 2023.

### **Final Recommendations and Implementation Plan (in priority order)**

*Final recommendations were arrived at by the Program Development Committee, following a review and assessment of the External Reviewers report, the response from the Department of History, and the Dean's response.*

**Recommendation 1:** That the Department, in consultation with the Faculty of Graduate Studies, explore and report on:

- a) the possibility and implications of cross-listing some or all of its Honours seminar courses with all of its Masters courses, with the exception of the Capstone Thesis course (HIST 4990) and the required theory and methodology core courses (HIST 8030 and HIST 8040). (While this may increase the seminar offerings at both levels and potentially increase Honours enrolment and, with it, recruitment into the MA program, it may also result in undergraduate students completing the courses required for the graduate degree, making them unable to pursue an MA at UWindsor.) Where 4<sup>th</sup>-year undergraduate and graduate courses are cross-listed, the learning outcomes and related assessments should clearly distinguish what is expected from the undergraduate and graduate students.
- b) the possibility of developing an integrated BA/MA program pathway, which would allow two graduate courses to apply to both the Honours and MA degrees.

**Agents:** Head, History Council, Faculty of Graduate Studies

**Completion by:** Fall 2023

**Recommendation 2:** That the Department undertake a curriculum review to better distinguish the Honours program from the General History BA, including reviewing:

- a) the calendar descriptions, objectives, and learning outcomes for HIST 1030 and HIST 2030, and
- b) the selection of electives required to fulfill program requirements, with a view to streamlining them.

**Agents:** Head, History Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2024

**Recommendation 3:** That the Department, in consultation with the Centre for Teaching and Learning, revise and update the graduate program learning outcomes so that they clearly align with each component of the GDLEs and better reflect the higher-order thinking expected from a graduate degree candidate.

**Agents:** Head, History Council, Centre for Teaching and Learning

**Completion by:** Fall 2024

**Recommendation 4:** That the Department work with the Faculty of Education to:

- (a) investigate and report on the feasibility of a concurrent education model focused on four-year honours programs, and whether and how this would differ from the current model where students combine a general degree with the two-year Education degree (5-year program) with the stated option for students to add their fourth-year honours courses in year 6, should they wish to graduate with a Concurrent four-year honours/Education degree, and
- (b) to better advertise the existing option of students adding their fourth-year honours courses in year 6, should they wish to graduate with a Concurrent Honours Program in History/Education.

**Agents:** Head, Dean of the Faculty of Education, History Council, Education Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2023

**Recommendation 5:** That the Department and the Dean work on a plan for faculty renewal, following the streamlining of its courses and program offerings to maximize efficiencies and complement existing expertise in the AAU.

**Agents:** Head, Dean of the Faculty, History Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2024 (following completion of curriculum review/streamlining)

**Recommendation 6:** That the Department review and report on the graduate program's funding and structure measured against comparable programs in Ontario, with a view to:

- (a) improving time-to-completion rates. This may be accomplished, in part, through the development of a one-year course-based Masters program as suggested by the Department.
- (b) maximizing student funding to support students' research and ensure consistent progress towards the completion of the degree. To address this recommendation, the Department is encouraged to work with administration to see if existing funding can be delivered to the students to lighten their GA workload. Faculty members are also encouraged to apply for tri-council grant funding to support student research and learning as an additional funding source for graduate students.

If the Department is satisfied with their current program's structure and funding, that it clearly articulate its perceived benefits to attract internal and external students.

**Agents:** Head, Dean of the Faculty

**Completion by:** Fall 2024

**Recommendation 7:** That the Department report on its efforts to:

- (a) encourage and support the re-activation of the research programs of faculty, especially those at mid-career, and
- (b) ensure that there has been careful consideration of workloads, especially for junior faculty, to ensure they do not burnout.

**Agents:** Head, Dean of the Faculty, Associate Dean, Research, Vice-President, Research and Innovation, Office of Research and Innovation Services

**Completion by:** Winter 2024

**Recommendation 8:** That the Department investigate and report on the gender imbalance in the undergraduate and graduate programs, with an eye to bringing them more in line with provincial and national ratios.

**Agents:** Head, History Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2024

**Recommendation 9:** That the Department update and refresh the website, which is critical for recruitment as well as to provide information to current students.

**Agents:** Head

**Completion by:** Fall 2023