INTERNAL SELF-STUDY REPORT

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN HISTORY

October 12, 2012

Department of History Graduate Committee

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I. Executive Summary for the Internal Self-Study Report

The History Department’s graduate program is an M.A.-only program of about 35 students that offers concentrations in United States, Local/Regional/Public (LRP), and World history. The LRP history concentration makes us unique in Virginia and attracts students nationally. Approximately one-third of our students continue their graduate education in Ph.D. programs, another third feed directly into Public history positions such as museums and historical sites, and many of the remainder become secondary school teachers. To allow us to better serve local teachers who enroll in the program as part-time students, we offer our required classes in the evenings.

The M.A. program has changed dramatically over the past fifteen years, with some of the most important changes occurring within the past four. Recent curricular changes include the elimination of the non-thesis option; subsuming the European history concentration into a World history concentration that allows for various area studies foci; and creating more graduate-only seminars in US, World, and Public history. The existence of these seminars has decreased reliance on combined graduate/undergraduate seminars. Recent changes have also increased the number of faculty involved in the program: a teaching rotation now exists for many 600-level courses, graduate advising has been spread among more faculty, and a broader range of faculty are involved in mentoring theses. The continuing development of the LRP history concentration has made the program attractive to a wider range of applicants, and we anticipate that the development of the World/Global concentration will increase and continue that trend. The replacement of rolling admissions with an application deadline has further elevated the quality of the applicant pool.

The program faces significant challenges. The most pressing of these are the insufficient levels of funding for M.A. students; an overreliance on faculty voluntarism to teach the graduate courses and read and direct graduate theses; and an insufficient number of faculty to maintain the LRP history concentration. Compensation for graduate assistants is very low, and a college requirement that reserves 60 percent of Graduate Assistantships to Virginia students limits the funding pool for highly qualified out-of-state students. Faculty who teach undergraduate courses with a graduate add-on (our 500-level courses) are, in essence, volunteering to teach an overload without just compensation. Likewise, faculty who read and direct graduate theses receive limited compensation and no release time from their teaching load and service obligations. Recent retirements combined with the recent assumption by some faculty of administrative responsibilities leaves the LRP concentration understaffed. In 2010, two external reviewers who reported on graduate education at James Madison University raised many of these concerns about graduate programs across the university. Their report noted that there was “no clear and standardized workload for graduate program directors or graduate faculty” and that the support for graduate assistantships (stipends and tuition) is “inadequate.” As of yet, The Graduate School has not been able to solve these problems.

Both the faculty and the graduate students are pleased with the graduate program and the directions it has been taking. But we are concerned that the current trajectory will be difficult to sustain without additional resources.

The history graduate program requests that the external reviewers provide guidance on the following issues:
1. Does the M.A. program have sufficient resources to fulfill its mission? If not, given current budgetary constraints, what should best be done?

   a) What level of funding should we be able to provide for our graduate students and how do we reach it? What other resources should we be giving them (in terms of travel funding, office space, etc.)? What internal and external sources of funding exist or can be found to meet these demands and to create new teaching assistantships?

   b) In terms of faculty resources, what percentage of faculty teaching time should be applied to graduate teaching and thesis advising, and how can we fairly compensate faculty for this teaching? In particular, how can we better address the staffing shortage affecting the LRP concentration?

   c) How do we compare in these regards to other programs of a similar size? What steps can the department and the university take to improve the resources for the graduate program without overburdening our faculty?

2. How can the graduate program best provide career counseling for students in the current academic and economic climate? How can the program best utilize the resources of alumni to educate current students on career opportunities, and how can the program best track alumni placement?

3. How do we assess the value of recent changes made to the program and the ways we might further strengthen the program? What other reforms might be complementary?
A. Academic Unit History and Mission

II.A.1. Give a brief history of the academic unit.

The Graduate Program in History is a small part of the larger academic unit of the Department of History. The Department of History was established as a separate entity beginning with the fall term, 1965. From its inception, the department has offered a major and minor at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It was the first history department in a historically white public institution in the Commonwealth of Virginia to offer courses in African history and among the first to offer courses in World and Asian history. The degrees offered are the B.A. and M.A. Some B.A. students choose an added concentration in public history and some others pursue secondary school licensure through the Interdisciplinary Social Sciences (ISS) program. Undergraduate students must complete 34 hours for the undergraduate history degree and need 37 hours to satisfy requirements for the Public history concentration within the major. The requirements for a major in history consist of introductory-, mid- and upper-level courses. The 100- and 200-level courses are world or regional surveys, covering extensive periods of time, while the 300- and 400-level courses focus on specific nations, time periods, or themes.

The number of undergraduate history majors has increased steadily in the last several years, from 267 majors in June 2006 to 384 in June 2010, excluding incoming freshmen (50 to 60 each year). There was a marked increase in the number of majors in 2007-2008 in part because of the absorption of ISS students into the History major. The major has undergone some limited change since the last major program review in 2010, reducing the number of required courses, although faculty resources remain stretched. The department also serves a number of interdisciplinary minors, including Africana Studies, American Studies, Asian Studies, Classical Studies, Historical Archaeology, International Humanities, Latin American Studies, Russian Studies, and Women’s Studies.

At the graduate level, the department offers an M.A. degree. Enrollment at the graduate level averages around 35 students, with one-fourth of these students enrolled part-time. Areas of concentration include U.S., World, and Local/Regional/Public History. Students seeking the M.A. must complete 30 graduate hours in history. In Fall 2009, the Program eliminated the non-thesis option, which it had offered since 2001, and once again required all students entering the program to write a thesis, which includes 6 credit hours that they take in the second year of the program. M.A. students must also demonstrate competency in a foreign language, successfully complete an oral examination, and must complete six hours outside of their field of concentration. Core graduate offerings include HIST 671: Seminar in Historical Research Methods; HIST 653: Patterns of World History; and HIST 673: Graduate Research and Writing Seminar.

At the start of the 2012-2013 academic year, the faculty will include 23 full-time, tenured faculty (7 professors, 15 associate professors), 10 full-time, tenure-track faculty (all assistant professors), one
Section II — Academic Unit Narrative

full-time visiting assistant professor, fourteen part-time faculty, one dissertation/teaching fellow, and 23 graduate teaching assistants.

The addition of new faculty has transformed the department by offering much greater diversity in teaching and research expertise. The undergraduate program has managed to expand its course offerings; however, the graduate program has lagged behind.

Regarding the undergraduate program, the department has expanded its coverage of world history. It now has two experts on Latin America, two on East Asia, two on Africa, and two on the Middle East. These faculty have enabled the department to continue its commitment to world history by covering areas of the world such as Korea, Afghanistan, and India, that it had not been able to before, and to deepen and expand the courses it offers on the history of all areas of the world. For example, the department now offers undergraduate courses in Latin America that cover Afro-Latin America, gender in colonial Latin America, and Latin American history through film; new courses have expanded the department’s upper-level offerings in the history of the Ancient world; and other new courses explore the history of class and ethnicity in Africa and colonialism in the Greater Middle East. The department has also begun to globalize its curriculum by developing new upper-division courses that are global or trans-regional in approach. These include undergraduate courses such as patterns of world history, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the history of travel and exploration, the Holocaust in global context, and the global economy and nationalism. As the program has developed, faculty have developed a series of public history offerings, covering such areas as material culture, public history, oral history, and the history of science and technology.

The department regularly reviews its curriculum, assesses its programs, and, through its Majors and Graduate Committees, has a formal mechanism for continuous refinement. The majors are consistent with best practices recommended by the American Historical Association.

A. 2. Provide the current mission statement of the academic unit. Explain how the current academic unit’s mission statement was developed and who participated in the development.

The Department of History supports the academic mission of James Madison University by providing the highest quality educational experiences within the liberal arts tradition that meet students’ needs and prepare students for meaningful careers and active citizenship. The department focuses on the student as individual learner and global citizen. Our dedicated faculty members are classroom innovators and scholars who work responsibly and supportively with students to expand their knowledge and skills and to create a foundation for their lifelong learning. The Department of History actively supports all University and College goals and objectives.

The Department of History developed its mission statement with the full participation of all department faculty.

A. 3. Explain how the mission statement of the academic unit supports the college and
Section II — Academic Unit Narrative

The mission statement of the Department of History supports the mission statements of the College of Arts and Letters and the University. The department's mission to prepare students for meaningful careers and active citizenship and to focus on the student as individual learner and global citizen supports the University’s mission of preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives. The department’s mission to expand the knowledge and skills of its students and to create a foundation for their lifelong learning supports the College’s mission of providing a challenging array of courses designed to promote lifelong learning by sharpening analytical abilities; improving computational and communications skills; cultivating a facility with written expression; enhancing cultural awareness, intensifying moral and aesthetic sensitivity and fostering awareness of the contingent nature of knowledge. The department’s mission supports the College-wide commitment to free but rigorous and controlled inquiry into human nature.

A. 4. Compare the number of students served by the academic unit (not by individual major/program) currently to the number during the previous APR.

a. How have resources accommodated the change in enrollment? Discuss cost-effectiveness related to:

1. Undergraduate or Graduate programs
2. Minors
3. General Education
4. Pre-professional programs
5. Elective courses
6. Other

The Graduate Program in History has never had an APR. The Department of History had an APR in the fall of 2010. The number of students served by the academic unit has not changed significantly in the last two years, necessitating no accommodations in resources. In addition to the nearly 400 undergraduate History majors and 35 graduate students that it serves, the department is deeply involved in General Education (nearly 75 percent of faculty load is in Gen Ed), area studies minors, and teacher education.

b. What significant changes have occurred within the academic unit since the previous APR? The Graduate Program in History has never had an APR. The Department of History had an APR in the fall of 2010. As a result of that review, the department reduced the number of required hours for the undergraduate major in history from 40 to 34.

Although that APR did not focus on the Graduate Program, and did so only as it related to the wider department, the External Team Report nevertheless recommended that the Department of History continue to reduce the number of joint graduate and undergraduate classes (400/500 level dual-listed courses) and offer more graduate-only courses (600 level). In response, the Graduate
Section II — Academic Unit Narrative

Committee worked further to determine how it can make the transition to a program of primarily 600-level courses that meets the needs of the students in the program in all three concentrations. Since the External Team’s Report, the Graduate Program has added HIST 650 and HIST 696 as regular offerings each spring and has offered HIST 610 in Fall 2012, which has helped to further reduce, but not eliminate, reliance on dual-listed courses.

The External Team Report in 2010 also recommended that the Department of History seek new sources of funding, particularly from General Education, to provide tuition remission that would appropriately compensate graduate assistants engaged in the teaching of General Education courses. To date, General Education has not offered the department any tuition remission, nor has the department secured new sources of tuition assistance for its graduate students. For details on how students in the Program are funded, see Section III.1.d. below.

A. 5. Address the adequacy of the staffing level for the academic unit regarding:

The Graduate Program in History shares classified wage staff and student assistants with the Department of History. For details, see section J.1.c below.

A. 6. Evaluate the level of technological support necessary to carry out the academic unit mission.

The Graduate Program in History relies upon the same technological support as the Department of History does. For details, see section J.3 below.

A. 7. Evaluate the adequacy of non-personnel based support (e.g. operating budget, grants, foundation money) needed to carry out the academic unit mission.

The Graduate Program in History relies upon the same non-personnel services budget as the Department of History. For details of the non-personnel services budget, see section J. 4 below

A. 8. Evaluate the adequacy of facilities in the academic unit including instructional facilities and office space needed to carry out the academic unit mission.

The Graduate Program in History uses the same facilities and office space as the Department of History does. For details, see section J.5.

A. 9. Based on demands and future projections, make recommendations related to critical areas to achieve the academic unit mission.

In the Department of History’s Fall 2010 Internal Self-Study, it identified a number of issues that also concern the Graduate Program. These are:
Section II — Academic Unit Narrative

Facilities: Although most students, based on annual assessment reports, are satisfied with the library and lab facilities, Jackson Hall remains overcrowded, outdated, and uncomfortable for most students. The department needs to make the improvement of classroom space and the upgrading of technology in Jackson classrooms a priority. In particular, the technology available in the Jackson classrooms should be upgraded to bring each of these classrooms up to the level of those elsewhere on campus. The department also needs to make the consolidation of faculty offices into one building a priority. The department should consider gaining access to classrooms in other parts of campus.

Staffing needs: With the movement of several faculty into administrative positions that reduce their teaching load (Professors Owusu-Ansah, Arndt, Mulrooney, Hyser, and Lanier), the department’s teaching strength has diminished. The only position the department received a line for was Professor Hyser’s. A few additional retirements over the next few years are likely to impede the department’s ability to serve its various constituencies. The department needs to play a more proactive role in identifying future hiring needs when positions do become available. This will become increasingly important since JMU’s enrollment has recently hit the 20,000 student mark.

Resources to support the programs: The lack of primary sources in the library has been a perennial problem. The department should continue to focus efforts on developing library holdings, such as primary sources, monographs, and primary source databases, that support its programs whenever and wherever possible.

Faculty development: The department needs to promote an atmosphere that encourages and allows for faculty development. Implicit and often unspoken expectations for faculty to contribute ever more time and energy to the teaching and service missions of the department and University often stand at direct odds with simultaneous expectations for faculty to maintain active research agendas. The inability to count all graduate teaching as part of faculty course loads exacerbates this problem.
Section III
Academic Program Narrative

A. Academic Program History and Mission

A.1. Give a brief history of the academic program, building on the last APR.

Although the Graduate Program in History dates back to the mid-1980s, it has never undergone an academic program review. The program started very small, with a handful of students in the program each year, but by the early 1990s, an average of 12–15 students entered the program each year. In the last eight years, an average of 16 students entered the program each year. The Program receives an average of 44 applications every year. Between 2006 and 2013, the Program offered admission to 69 percent of the applicants who applied for admission; of those applicants receiving offers of admission, 53 percent enrolled in the Program (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Applications</th>
<th>Offers of Admission</th>
<th>New Students Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A year begins in summer and counts applications received in summer, fall, and the following spring. Thus 2006 includes applications received between summer 2005 and spring 2006. New students enrolled includes those who entered the program in fall or spring. Numbers for 2013 are projections.

The Program attracts applicants from across the nation. Since 2007, almost 47 percent of the 318 applicants to the program were from outside of the state of Virginia. Of the 113 students who entered the program during that time, almost 49 percent of them were residents of states other than Virginia (see Table 2).
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

Table 2
Out-of-State Applications, Offers of Admission, and Enrollments
Graduate Program in History, 2007–13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Applicants</th>
<th>Number of Offers</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Out-of-State</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 2000, an average of nearly 11 students graduate from the program each year. The number of students completing the program fluctuated quite a bit between 2000 and 2006. In some years, the number of students completing the degree was quite low, with only five students graduating in 2002 and three in 2006. Since 2007, the number of students graduating has become more consistent, with an average of 13.5 students completing the degree each academic year (See Table 3).

Table 3
Number of Students Graduating from the MA Program in History, 2000–2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Graduates</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Projected; Note: Degrees are awarded in May, August, and December each year.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

The History graduate program has undergone a series of revisions in the last fifteen years largely driven by student input. In 1999–2000 a committee composed of faculty and graduate students recommended revising the graduate program with a total of twenty-one hours at the 600 level. Two of these courses would include HIST 670 (Research Seminar) and either HIST 671 (Readings in European History) or HIST 672 (Readings in American History). To encourage speedier completion of M.A. theses, the committee also recommended developing a new course that had writing and research as its primary focus. The result was HIST 673 (Graduate Research and Writing Seminar), which was first taught in Spring 2000. The committee also recommended reducing the thesis requirement from six hours to three, and introducing a non-thesis option.

Questionnaires sent to alumni and students revealed a significant and longstanding interest in regional, local, and public history. This precipitated a recommendation for a graduate track in Local/Regional/Public History, which was subsequently formally adopted by the graduate program.

A second series of revisions occurred in 2008–09. The Graduate Committee abolished the policy of rolling admission and set February 1 as the application deadline date. The change has enabled the committee to evaluate entire pools of applicants at one time in order to better assemble quality cohorts of incoming students as well as to maintain steady numbers of students in the program. The Graduate Committee also established new guidelines for the MA Thesis. It abolished the non-thesis option and returned the thesis experience to six-credit hours. All students entering the program since 2009 must complete a thesis. Graduate students concentrating in Local/Regional/Public History (LRP) may undertake either a thesis on a public history topic or an applied research/thesis project as the culmination of the Master of Arts program. Students who complete a thesis make a formal presentation of their research at a departmental reception of faculty and graduate students to be held during the last week of the spring semester.

In 2009 the Graduate Committee conducted an extensive review of its course offerings, curriculum, and core requirements and made a number of changes based upon the findings of its deliberations. The details of those changes are described below in Section III.B.2. In short, beginning with the Fall 2010 semester the program replaced HIST 672 Historiography with a new world history seminar required of all incoming students to the program. Students either take HIST 653 Patterns of World History or HIST 656 Global Economy and Nationalism (offered every third year as the equivalent of HIST 653). The committee also established a rotation of three faculty to teach the course. In 2010 the Graduate Program in History began to require all students in the US History Concentration to take at least one offering of HIST 600 Seminar in U.S. History: Early Period and HIST 605 Seminar in U.S. History: Recent Period. HIST 600 is offered every fall and HIST 605 is offered every spring. The committee established a rotation of faculty to teach these graduate-student only courses. Finally, as part of its review of the curriculum, the Graduate Program replaced the European history concentration with a new World history concentration. To support that new concentration the program now offers HIST 650 Seminar in World History every spring, to be taught by a regular rotation of faculty.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

A. 2. Provide current mission statement of the academic program.

The graduate program in history at James Madison University offers concentrations in World, United States, or LRP history. It permits students to deepen their understanding, acquire knowledge and develop critical skills necessary for advanced research and writing in history. Through a blend of courses and internships, the program enhances levels of professional competence that demand mastery of the techniques of research, critical thinking, and careful oral and written communication. Graduates of the program are able to demonstrate an ability to understand and perform scholarly research with cross-disciplinary perspectives. We see this as essential since it provides important skills designed to meet the changing needs of our students in society.

To ensure that our mission is kept in focus, we require graduates to demonstrate an advanced knowledge in their specific areas of study.

These often interrelated goals are achieved through coherent, orderly programs of study encompassing investigation and/or supervised practical experience. As part of a comprehensive university supported by public funds, the graduate program in history is committed to serving the needs of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the region. The Department of History’s graduate program encourages students to develop strengths in critical and creative thinking, communication and applied skills. A balanced combination of theoretical and practical studies prepares the successful graduate for advancement in the workplace, future educational opportunities, informed participation in today’s increasingly more complicated society and leadership in community affairs.

The graduate program in history serves multiple audiences. Since historians today practice their discipline in a variety of careers, we offer a concentration in LRP history. The concentration exposes students to the broad range of skills and issues associated with public history while providing them with a solid advanced background in history. Students also augment their academic training through internships in a range of public history settings including museums, archives, government agencies, libraries, historic preservation organizations, businesses, contract history firms, cultural resource management firms and historic sites.

The Department of History’s graduate program actively supports all university and college goals and objectives.

A. 3. Explain how the current academic program mission statement was developed and who participated in the development.

The Department of History’s Graduate Committee developed the program’s current mission statement.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

A. 4. Explain how the mission statement supports the college and university mission statements.

The mission statement of the Graduate Program in History supports the mission statements of the College of Arts and Letters, The Graduate School, and the University. The program’s mission to prepare graduates for advancement in the workplace, future educational opportunities, informed participation in today’s increasingly more complicated society and leadership in community affairs supports the University’s mission of preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives. The program’s mission to help students deepen their understanding, acquire knowledge and develop critical skills necessary for advanced research and writing in history and to perform scholarly research with cross-disciplinary perspectives supports The Graduate School’s mission of promoting excellence in lifelong education through graduate programs of distinction. The program’s mission to teach the skills designed to meet the changing needs of our students in society as well as to design concentrations that serve multiple audiences supports The Graduate School’s mission to reach a diverse student body through graduate programs of distinction. The program’s mission also supports the College’s mission of providing a challenging array of courses designed to promote lifelong learning by sharpening analytical abilities; improving computational and communications skills; cultivating a facility with written expression; enhancing cultural awareness, intensifying moral and aesthetic sensitivity and fostering awareness of the contingent nature of knowledge. The program’s mission supports the College-wide commitment to free but rigorous and controlled inquiry into human nature.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

B. 1. Evaluate the program goals and objectives and how they relate to the unit mission.

The Department of History requires all students completing the graduate major in history to meet the following objectives:

**Content:** Students will know the major events, themes, individuals, and issues in their chosen fields of study.

**Chronology:** Students must demonstrate the importance of change and continuity over time and how people have reacted to such change. This will include the importance of cause and effect in history and the significance of historical context.

**Collection:** Students must demonstrate the ability to locate and collect relevant historical evidence. Students must understand how to gather evidence using bibliographical materials available in printed, electronic and computerized formats.

**Analysis:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the different approaches employed by historians in using evidence and how historical perspectives have changed over time. Central to the analysis of evidence is the critical selection and evaluation of evidence. For historians, thinking critically might be described as 1) Identifying the thesis of an argument; 2) Identifying how sources have been used in an argument; 3) Identifying the conclusions of an argument; 4) Determining the
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

perspective, bias and reliability of an argument; 5) Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their peers’ arguments.

**Synthesis:** As the culmination of the critical thinking process, students must master the ability to produce an original written and oral synthesis of primary and secondary evidence. This will be achieved through the critical examination of evidence and synthesis of sources into a coherent product with a thesis and conclusion(s) based on responsible use of the evidence. Writing skills would be reinforced through an emphasis on writing, editing, proofreading, and word processing (computer) skills. Students will demonstrate the ability to articulate a thoroughly researched, carefully thought, and well-organized position in both written and oral formats.

All of these objectives fulfill the Program’s mission to teach students to acquire knowledge and develop critical skills necessary for advanced research and writing in history as well as to develop a mastery of the techniques of research, critical thinking, and careful oral and written communication

B. 2. Identify and briefly describe the major activities that have supported efforts in achieving these goals and objectives.

In 2000, to help push students into the thesis research and writing process earlier, the program adopted HIST 673: Graduate Research and Writing Seminar, proposed and designed by Dr. Gabrielle Lanier, and began requiring it for all first-year students. The course is an intensive research and writing seminar focused on the process of conceptualizing, researching, writing, and refining historical research papers grounded in primary sources. Emphasis is on evaluation of sources, interpretation of evidence, refinement of presentation, peer review, and development of professional standards of criticism. HIST 673 was designed to provide a follow-up to the first-semester research and readings courses, and to prepare students for the intensive research and writing required for the thesis as well as all other graduate courses. The specific objectives for including this course in the curriculum included improving student competence in oral exams and theses, and giving students a good start on conceptualizing and researching their theses.

In 2000/01, following the recommendations of the 1999–2000 graduate program subcommittee, the program inaugurated the Local/Regional, and Public History track, largely in response to the significant interest expressed by alumni and students. Interest in the track has increased steadily since then, and especially since 2007, when a dedicated public history assistantship that places students in public history venues was inaugurated. Graduate students concentrating in Local/Regional/Public History may also undertake either a traditional M.A. thesis or an applied research/thesis project as the culmination of the Master of Arts program. Like the thesis, the applied research/thesis project requires students to engage in original research, delve deeply into the primary sources, and make a significant contribution with their research, but the latter should result in an end product that has practical applications and also enhances the student’s employment portfolio.

In 2001, as an outgrowth of the peer-review process at the core of HIST 673, a small cohort of graduate students in the program at the time proposed creating a graduate student-run journal that would solicit papers from graduate students in other programs, submit them to peer review, and edit
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

and publish the best papers in an annual online journal. The goal was to lend distinction to the JMU graduate program. The idea gave way to the Madison Historical Review, which has been continuously run by an editorial team of graduate students since the first issue appeared in the Spring of 2002. Each year, one graduate student serves as the Editor of the MHR, and an editorial board of graduate students work to solicit submissions and deliberate over which papers the journal should accept and publish. The experience provides graduate students in the program with an excellent opportunity to put into practice the analytical skills that they develop in their course work. It is also a unique experience promoting the kind of collaborative work among young historians that helps students to develop the foundations of their professional identity. The MHR enables students to develop mastery of the professional standards of peer-reviewing.

Beginning in the 2007–08 academic year, when Dr. Steven Reich assumed the position of Graduate Program Director, the Graduate Committee embarked upon a comprehensive review of its Program to evaluate how well it currently met the goals and objectives of the Program. The first reform that the Program adopted was to abolish the non-thesis option for the MA degree, to require all incoming students, beginning with the cohort of students who entered the program in Fall 2009, to write a thesis as a requirement for the degree, and to change the thesis experience from three credits to six credits. In order to provide flexibility for students in the LRP history concentration, the Program permits such students to undertake either a thesis on a public history topic or an applied research/thesis project as the culmination of the Master of Arts program. The Program also established new guidelines for the thesis, including a timetable of dates and deadlines to help thesis directors guide their students through the research and writing process. By compelling students to complete a full rough draft by the middle of the second semester of their second year, readers on the thesis committee now have ample time to read and make substantive comments and recommendations for revision. Likewise, students have time for the thoughtful incorporation of these reviews into the final draft submitted to The Graduate School in the 14th week of the semester. Students who complete a thesis make a formal presentation of their research at a departmental reception of faculty and graduate students to be held during the last week of the spring semester. All graduate students are required to attend (see Appendix A).

In the 2008–09 academic year, the Graduate Committee conducted an extensive review of its course curriculum and submitted a final report to the Department of History on course offerings at the graduate level in September 2009 (see Appendix F). At the time that the committee conducted its review, the Program required all students entering the graduate program, regardless of concentration, to take three core courses in their first year in the program: HIST 671, 672, and 673. HIST 671 offered a systematic presentation of the theories and approaches to historical research, including detailed analysis of historiography past and present. HIST 672 was an intensive reading colloquium focused on selected historiographical issues, topics, concepts, methodologies and interpretations of European history from the Renaissance to the end of the 20th century and in American history from the colonial period to the end of the 20th century. HIST 673 offers an intensive research and writing seminar focused on the process of conceptualizing, researching, writing and refining historical research papers grounded in primary sources. The course demands that students develop skills in reviewing the written work of their peers.
These were the only courses offered that were designed for, and open exclusively to, graduate students. Students took the rest of their course work in dual-level courses numbered 500 that are cross-listed with 400-level undergraduate courses. These dual-level courses generally have an enrollment of 18 undergraduates and three graduate students, though some carry a 16/5 ratio. The 500-level offering of the course has its own separate syllabus and, in addition to meeting with the undergraduates, meets in a fourth hour with only the graduate students. Faculty are free to structure the 500-level component as they see fit so long as they meet the expectation to have additional and/or different writing assignments for the graduate students as well as additional reading for the fourth-hour sessions. The Program thus offered a wide variety of courses open to three students each (often 15 to 20 different courses per term) that reflected the diverse teaching interests of the faculty. On the other hand, the department offered no foundational or topical courses in the three fields of concentration open exclusively to graduate students.

While the dual level courses have diversified the topical offerings available to graduate students, they have left a series of fundamental problems. Students take courses that often reflect the conceptual designs of the 400-level undergraduate courses, courses that were originally designed to meet the needs of our undergraduates more than the graduate students. Thus, students complete their course work with significant gaps in coverage in their fields of concentration.

In order to provide graduate students with more instruction in the development of their research skills and to offer them greater foundational course work in their chosen field of concentration, the graduate committee proposed a series of changes to the graduate curriculum that the department adopted and implemented in Fall 2010.

• Restructure HIST 671 in order to achieve a balance in coverage between teaching the philosophy of history and foundational research skills such as locating and working with sources and interpreting evidence. Students will leave this course with an exposure to some of the philosophy of history currently taught but with core instruction in the research skills that will enable them to make a smoother transition to HIST 673 and to their thesis research.

• The Program eliminated HIST 672, which students and faculty found unworkable, and replaced it with a graduate seminar in global history, required of all incoming students in their first semester enrolled in the program. Such a course would provide students with an introduction to the literature, concepts, themes and methodology of world history, a subfield of history that focuses on trans-regional and global topics. It examines the interactions and links between regions, makes use of comparative historical studies of different societies and cultures, and seeks to provide a broad global framework for understanding historical issues and topics. The Program adopted HIST 653 Patterns of World History and HIST 656 Global Economy and Nationalism as courses that fulfill this mission.

• To commit to providing graduate students with the kind of intensive seminar setting that they require, which will give them more opportunity to learn from and grow with their peers, a critical component of graduate education, the Program developed new 600 level courses in
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the various fields of concentration. For the U.S. concentration, the Program now offers HIST 600 Graduate Seminar in U.S. History: Early Period every fall and HIST 605 Graduate Seminar in U.S. History: Recent Period every spring. Faculty teaching the class are free to design the seminar as they see fit so long as the course does not duplicate 500-level offerings, and offers a thematic, historiographic survey of the topic that emphasizes classic and current historiographical trends, debates in the field, and how historical questions in the field have changed. Students who successfully complete the course should come away with a sophisticated understanding of the state of the field in the topic. The department developed a rotation of interested faculty to offer these seminars. Because a different faculty member teaches the class each year, and gives the course a different emphasis, students in the U.S. concentration can take each class twice. To meet the needs for students in the LRP concentration, HIST 696 Introduction to Public History is now offered every spring, which provides students in LRP with a concentration-specific 600-level seminar.

In 2010, the Graduate Committee proposed, and the History Department approved, that the Program subsume the European History Concentration into a World History Concentration. In addition to HIST 653 and 656, the Program offers HIST 650 Seminar in World History every spring to provide students in that concentration with a concentration-specific 600-level seminar.

For further details on program requirements for the thesis, oral comprehensive exam, and foreign language competency requirement, see appendices A, B, and C.

B. 3. Identify the degree of participation and involvement of program faculty in carrying out program objectives.

All faculty in the department have graduate faculty status. Between 2000 and 2010, only three faculty members regularly taught graduate students. Dr. Owusu-Ansah taught HIST 671. Dr. Hallman (emeritus) taught HIST 672. Dr. Lanier taught HIST 673. Every year, the same three faculty taught the three required core courses and were thus the only faculty who had any sustained exposure to the graduate program and its full contingent of students. Other faculty periodically met a handful (about two to four) of graduate students whenever they taught a 400-level course that carried a 500-level dual section. Faculty who repeatedly taught HIST 395 from semester to semester or who seldom or never taught at the 400-level had little exposure to the graduate program or its students. Because writing a thesis was not a requirement for the degree, many faculty seldom had the opportunity to serve on thesis or comprehensive oral exam committees. The graduate program thus lacked critical visibility, even among the department’s own faculty.

Since 2010, with the addition of new 600-level classes, a significant number of faculty have become involved in graduate teaching. Now, two of the three required core courses (HIST 671 and HIST 653/656) have a rotation of three faculty. The required US history courses (HIST 600 and HIST 605) and the spring-semester World History course (HIST 650) also have a regular rotation of faculty. And now that the thesis is a requirement for the degree, many more faculty serve as
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directors and readers on theses and have been pulled into serving on comprehensive oral exam committees.

Furthermore, beginning in 2009, the Graduate Program Director assigns all incoming graduate students an in-take advisor who can help orient new students to the department and to faculty who share their wider scholarly interests. In-take advisors meet with these students and learn about their field of interest, their career plans, and how they can take advantage of what the department and the program has to offer to help make their experience in the program serve those interests and plans. In-take advisors direct students to appropriate faculty in the department who have expertise in the student's areas of interest.

C. Discuss the Academic Program Structure

C. 1. Describe the current structure of the program, including a list of the curricular requirements.

The departmental requirements for the Master of Arts degree with a major in history are as follows: Thirty graduate credit hours in history (HIST 653 or HIST 656, HIST 671 and HIST 673 required). All students in the U.S. concentration must take at least one offering of HIST 600 and one offering of HIST 605. Students in the U.S. concentration must take at least 21 credits at the 600 level or above. All students in the U.S. concentration and in the LRP concentration must take, in addition to HIST 653 or HIST 656, three credit hours of course work outside the field of their concentration. All students in the world concentration must take at least six credit hours of course work in the region(s) of their thesis and must take six credit hours of course work in regions other than the region of their thesis. All students must complete the second year of a college course in a modern foreign language with a grade of C or above or successfully complete a reading examination approved by the history department in a modern foreign language. Students must complete a thesis for six credit hours. Students must complete a comprehensive examination in one of the three fields of concentration: World history, United States history, or LRP history. Most students in the LRP history concentration take HIST 696 Introduction to Public History as well as HIST 640 Graduate Internship in History and two 500-level public history courses.

All Master of Arts students are required to complete the following courses.

First Year, Fall Semester
HIST 653. Patterns of World History (or its equivalent)
HIST 671. Seminar in Historical Research Methods

First Year, Spring Semester
HIST 673. Graduate Research and Writing Seminar
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Second Year, Fall Semester
HIST 700. Thesis

Second Year, Spring Semester
HIST 700. Thesis

C. 2. Discuss the process whereby program faculty work collectively to develop curricula and do long-range planning for the program.

The Graduate Committee has been the place where faculty collaborate to develop long-range planning. Since 2007 the Graduate Committee has met regularly throughout the year to discuss how to revise the program, evaluate and reflect on how the program is working, and to review and evaluate applications for admission. The staff of the committee has rotated considerably, bringing in new faculty to the deliberations. The Graduate Committee always consists of at least one faculty member from each of the following areas: public history, U.S. history, European history, and World history.

The deliberations of the committee have led to the reforms and changes to the program described at greater length in section II.B.2 above.

The Graduate Committee vets all course syllabi of faculty teaching HIST 600, 605, 610, 615, and 650 to insure that courses meet program standards and the goals and objectives of the program.

C. 3. Evaluate the program in the following areas:

a. Coherence and integrity of the curriculum when compared to standards of best practice as determined by regional and national learned societies.

According to the American Historical Association’s 2005 report Retrieving the Master’s Degree from the Dustbin of History (pp. 42–43), master’s programs in history should stress five essential elements of mastery. First, students should develop a base of historical knowledge that combines both breadth and depth, should incorporate a comparative or global perspective, and should become “educated history generalists.” The Program, particularly with the adoption of the recent curricular changes, meets this element of mastery. HIST 600 and 605 were expressly designed to steer students away from concentrating the course work on 500 level classes on topics of their interest only and forced them into courses that demand far greater breadth. In requiring all students to take HIST 653 and in inaugurating a World History concentration, the Program incorporates a global perspective for all students.

The second element of mastery that the report stresses is research and presentation skills. By now requiring all students to complete a thesis or substantial research project, the Program integrates this element of mastery. By requiring all students to make an oral presentation of their research, it
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emphasizes the distinction between written and oral presentation of research. The Program also offers modest financial support for students to present papers and research at academic conferences (see Appendix E). Each year, at least 8–10 students travel to conferences and present portions of their thesis or other papers that they wrote in graduate seminars.

Third, the AHA report recommends that Programs introduce students to historical pedagogy as a third element of mastery. The Program provides unique opportunities for its students to gain teaching experience. Nearly all students in the program carry a graduate assistantship that requires them to assist faculty with the instruction of the introductory US and World history courses for undergraduates. Teaching assistants help faculty with the design of tests and paper topics, facilitate class discussions in discussion sections, deliver lectures before 100 or more students, grade papers and essay exams, and meet with undergraduate students outside of class about course work and assignments. Faculty assigned a teaching assistant work closely with the TA to help the student to develop the skills and techniques of effective teaching. Because the department highly values teaching at the undergraduate level, it stresses the importance of teaching in the profession to its graduate students.

According to the AHA report, students at the master’s level should develop a mastery of the foundations for a professional identity as a historian. Students in the program have multiple opportunities to learn professional standards and practices. HIST 673 teaches students the ethics and standards of effective peer-reviewing; students attend professional conferences and make presentations at conferences that immerse them in a professional setting outside the classroom; some of the Program’s graduate assistants hold positions such as working in the special collections of the library, editing the Madison Historical Review, or performing professional duties; LRP students often take internships, especially during the summer between their first and second year, which offer rich opportunities for developing their identity as historians rather than just students. Some students have published the work that they have written in the program in graduate student journals and other venues (see Appendix E).

Finally, the AHA insists that students in a master’s program should learn to think like historians. All classes expose students to what the report calls “historical habits of mind” and “historiographical sensibilities.” The required Graduate Seminar in Historical Methods (HIST 671), which all students take in the first semester of their first year, teaches M.A. students the methods historians use and the skills they must acquire to research and write good history. HIST 671 also introduces them to prominent subfields of study in the history discipline, recent turning points in historical trends, and important theoretical concerns. Likewise, the other foundational courses HIST 653/656 and HIST 673 teach students to think critically about how historians write about the past while improving their own abilities to research and write history.

b. Responsiveness of the curriculum to societal needs.

The Program serves multiple audiences and constituencies and is not designed simply to prepare students to become doctoral students. The Program seeks to tailor students’ courses of study,
assistantship assignments, internships, and comprehensive exams to meet their specific career goals. The program serves area school teachers who enter the Program seeking to enhance their credentials as social studies teachers. The LRP concentration exposes students to the broad range of skills and issues associated with public history while providing them with a solid advanced background in history. Students also augment their academic training through internships in a range of public history settings including museums, archives, government agencies, libraries, historic preservation organizations, businesses, contract history firms, cultural resource management firms and historic sites.

D. Program Viability

D.1. Evaluate the viability of the program in terms of state, regional and national needs. What is unique about the JMU program?

In 2003 the American Historical Association (AHA) conducted an extensive survey of student goals for pursuing a master’s degree in history. The AHA asked a sample of students to describe their career goals from a wide range of options, allowing them to select as many options as they wanted. Although 48 percent of respondents indicated that the pursuit of a PhD in history was one of their career goals, the AHA concluded from its data that for many students (perhaps as many as three-quarters), the master’s degree was the last stop in their formal training as historians. Because many of these students desired to teach in a secondary school classroom, work for a public history institution, or teach at the community college level, the AHA observed that more Americans learn their history from professionals among these groups rather than from history professors at four-year colleges. Consequently, “holders of master’s degrees are the nation’s unstudied, even unknown, but ubiquitous teachers of history” and “important mediators between academic history departments and the communities around them.” Another category of students that the AHA identifies are those students (many of whom are older adults) who seek a master’s degree as an avocation later in life. They are motivated by a love of history and a desire to continue their education that is not necessarily connected to achieving professional advancement or credential (Retrieving the Master’s Degree from the Dustbin of History, 15–18).

There are a number of qualities that distinguish JMU’s Master’s Program in History that not only make it unique but that position it well to meet the heterogeneous needs of the students who pursue master’s degrees in history.

• Of the eleven colleges and universities in Virginia that offers a master’s degree, JMU’s program is the only one that offers a concentration in public history. Thus, JMU’s program is one of the few master’s programs in history in the region that trains the students who will become the “public face of the historical profession.” Most professional public historians hold the master’s degree as their terminal degree.
• The Program builds in significant flexibility in the scheduling of its classes, particularly by scheduling 600-level seminars in the evening, in order to encourage area secondary school
teachers to pursue the master’s degree while they continue to work as full-time school teachers. In recent years, secondary school teachers from the Shenandoah, Rockingham, and Augusta county school districts have enrolled in the program. The Program also attracts secondary school teachers who work in the many private schools throughout the region. Three of the thirty-five students currently enrolled in the Program are full-time school teachers pursuing the degree part time. That flexibility also enables other area working professionals—librarians, curators, archivists—to enroll in the program and pursue the degree part time while continuing to work full time. That same flexibility also attracts a number of older students who pursue the degree as an avocation. As the AHA recommends, master’s programs should not distinguish these students from others who seek the degree for professional credential and career advancement, and the JMU Program makes no distinction and commits to providing them with as rigorous a program of study as any other student.

- The Program offers students a choice of concentrations. The World concentration is also unique as is the fact that the faculty have experts who study the history of all major regions of the world outside of the United States (Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America).
- The Program provides teaching experience to all students on assistantship, and faculty offer students close mentorship in teaching. Faculty ensure that students’ course work in the program actively relates to what they do in the classroom as part of their assistantship. Teaching assistantships are thus integral to their program of study. Thus, those students who ultimately teach in a secondary classroom or community college setting gain valuable, practical training and experience as part of their program of study.
- The core foundational courses provide training in research methodology that prepares students to conduct original research and the successful completion of a thesis as a requirement for graduation enables those students interested in pursuing a PhD to take the rigorous course work and gain exposure to the demands of advanced graduate training, yet without committing to the pursuit of the doctorate. The Program enables those students who are not yet credible applicants for admission to top-tier PhD programs to develop the credentials, experience, professional training, and intellectual maturity that enable them to become competitive applicants for admission. In recent years, graduates of our program have been accepted to a number of nationally ranked PhD programs at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Wisconsin, the College of William & Mary, Rice University, Tulane University, the University of South Carolina, and the University of West Virginia. These students have all commented to their thesis directors and advisors that the program prepared them well for success at the next level of professional training.
- At the same time, many of the students who aspire to a PhD conclude that they do not wish to advance beyond the master’s level. Some students change their mind for economic or personal reasons; while many others realize during the course of the study in the Program that they have neither the desire, inclination, nor intellectual ability to invest another four to six years of their lives in pursuit of a doctoral degree in history. As the AHA’s report on the master’s degree concludes, this is not an undesirable outcome, and programs that enable students to reach these decisions without the substantial financial and emotional investment of a doctoral program are in the best long-term interests of the student.
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• The small size of the Program enables students to have multiple opportunities to work closely with faculty.
• Faculty encourage (and offer modest financial support) for students to present papers and research at academic conferences
• Graduate students edit and publish each year the Madison Historical Review.

D.2. Assess the size of the program regarding need for expansion or contraction. Use regional and national data sources regarding demand for the program and placement of majors in the employment market.

The program is currently at the right size for the faculty in the department. Were the program to increase the number of students, the current faculty would not be able to offer the close supervision that it currently does. More students would weaken, rather than strengthen the program. Rather than increase the size of the program, the faculty would like to elevate further the quality of the students who enter the program. Since the department abolished rolling admissions, it has seen an expansion both in the number of applicants to the program and a steady increase in the quality of the students. Several students in recent years have gone on to first-tier research universities on full-funding to pursue their doctorates in history. Many of the graduates of the Program with a public history concentration now work as employed staff the museums and historic sites throughout the state of Virginia and the Mid-Atlantic region, including places such as Colonial Williamsburg, the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, James Madison’s Montpelier, and the Frontier Culture Museum.

E. Discuss Academic Program Resource Use

E.1. Compare the number of students served by the major currently to the number during the previous APR. How have resources accommodated the change in enrollment?

Since this is the first academic program review of the graduate program in history, we are unable to state how resources have changed. Enrollment numbers have remained steady over the last five years, with about thirty-five to forty full-time and part-time students in the program. There has been no appreciable change in resources over that time. The shift to the thesis requirement has placed more demands on faculty time. In fact, the program’s viability relies on faculty volunteers to direct theses, serve as readers on theses, offer 500-level sections of their 400-level undergraduate courses, and chair or serve on oral exam committees. Faculty offer these essential services to the graduate program on top of their regular undergraduate teaching, research, and service loads. In 2012, for the first time, the department paid thesis directors a $300 stipend and readers a $100 stipend to partially compensate them for their work in advancing student research. It is unclear, however, whether this will become normal departmental practice.

E.2. What changes have resulted from technology implemented for the program?
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The department has made no appreciable changes to the program because of technology. The discipline remains a reading, writing, and discussion-intensive discipline. The university library’s expansion of digital collections and digital databases has, however, enhanced the kinds of research that students conduct in the program. Many students benefit heavily from the interlibrary loan services which deliver scans of articles electronically.

F. Evaluate the Program’s Role in the College and the University

F.1. Discuss the relationship of the program to college and university-wide efforts including:

a. Undergraduate or Graduate programs The Department of History’s Graduate Program Director serves on the Graduate Council, The Graduate School’s governing body. In addition, Dr. Reich has served on the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council and has consulted extensively with the other executive board members and with Dean Reid Linn in developing The Graduate School’s response to its recent Academic Program Review.

b. General Education Graduate teaching assistants in the Department of History play a vital role in the successful teaching of the department’s general education offerings. Each section of GHIST 225 United States History and GHIST 101 World History to 1500 and GHIST 102 World History since 1500 has a graduate teaching assistant assigned to it. The teaching assistants teach half of the discussion sections in GHIST 225 and enable faculty in all of these courses to assign paper assignments and essay exams because the graduate assistants provide critical grading. Without the help of the graduate students, the department would not be able to maintain these writing standards in these mass survey courses.

c. – f. As a graduate program in a distinct academic discipline, the Program plays a limited role in other areas of the college and university, including minor offerings, cross-disciplinary programs, pre-professional programs, and non-majors. Students in the Program have, however, served as graduate assistants to other programs. History students in recent years have held assistantships in the Writing Program, serving as writing tutors/instructors, have held assistantships in other departments, such as the School of Art and Art History, have held assistantships in the Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Faculty Diversity, and have held assistantships working in the Special Collections of Carrier Library. Graduate students in the program have also participated in a number of initiatives sponsored by the Center for Faculty Innovation. Students in the program have facilitated panels at new student orientations for graduate students and have presented their research the CFI’s annual Graduate Student Colloquium, held each August right before the beginning of the Fall semester. In the last two years, two History students have been selected by CFI to participate in its annual Graduate Research Fellows Program, which brings together select graduate students from various programs who collaborate to promote cross-disciplinary exchanges that benefit their own research.

F. 2. Discuss the commitment among program faculty and students to college and
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university initiatives

The high scholarly standards of the history department’s graduate program reinforce JMU’s strategic plan and other initiatives. Both the faculty and the graduate students in history commit themselves to excellence in instruction and research. Over the past two years, faculty, staff, and administrators across the University have participated in focused discussions of academic rigor. These efforts to promote academic culture were partially a response to episodes of undergraduate binge drinking and misbehavior. As history graduate student teaching assistants interact with undergraduates in the classroom, they provide strong models of academic rigor.

Recent revisions to the department’s graduate program demonstrate the program’s commitment to goals emphasized in the University’s strategic plan, including educational innovation and thoughtful program assessment. History department faculty and students also support the University’s environmental stewardship goals by conserving resources.

G. Discuss the Role of Students and Alumni in the Program

1. Students

a. Describe the involvement of students in program affairs including student organizations. Each class of graduate students nominates and elects two students to serve as student representatives to the Graduate Committee. These students provide the Graduate Committee with key insights on how the program is working and convey to the Program Director and the Committee student concerns or problems. The graduate student representatives also participated in the Graduate Committee’s comprehensive review of its program and helped to develop the changes that the Program eventually implemented.

b. Discuss student perception of the program (student evaluations, exit interviews, focus groups, etc.). The Graduate committee asked the graduate student representatives to survey the current graduate students about their perceptions of the program. According to their report, both first and second year graduate students have overwhelmingly positive things to say about the program; while there are some minor differences between the two cohorts, they largely agree in their estimation of the program. However, some students feel the program is not well known. The most important reason for choosing the program was availability of funding; proximity/location, and the public history program were the next two most popular. The most striking difference between the two years is that first-year students list the reputation of the school and program as a primary reason for enrolling at JMU.

Overall, students perceive a difference in how the concentrations are treated. Some felt world history seemed less valuable to the program, especially since its course offerings are comparatively limited. Furthermore, there is a perception among students that public history is viewed as less academically rigorous. There is a significant portion of students who feel the course offerings are too
limited. Some students also wish there were more 600 level seminars, or specific guidelines regulating the structure of cross-listed classes (400/500), as there is too much variance in the way these sections are treated by professors. On a similar note, students find value in keeping seminars open to both first and second year graduate students. These combined 600 level classes, students say, strengthen the graduate community and offer students a chance to learn from one another.

Most students see themselves as an important part of the program, saying they feel valued and respected. Non-TAs, though, feel less important than their colleagues. The majority of students see their workload and compensation as adequate. Some express enjoyment in the extra responsibility and the experience being a TA offers. There are students who believe there should be more training for TAs. A vast majority of students believe the program is preparing them for their desired career goals, whether that be continuing on to a PhD program or entering the workforce.

Students have identified some highlights of the program. One such highlight is the nature of the graduate community, described as “friendly,” “welcoming,” and “supportive.” Professor mentorship and availability were also mentioned as positive aspects of the program. And when asked to state a specific element of the program that other schools should emulate, a decisive majority of students mentioned Dr. Lanier’s HIST 673 course.

c. Describe the academic and pre-career advising system within the program. The Program provides little formal pre-career advising. In recent years, the Program Director has conducted information sessions for students interested in applying for PhD programs in History. Individual faculty do a lot of advising and career-planning with individual students.

G.2. Alumni

a. Describe the involvement of alumni in program affairs. Alumni play a very limited role in Program affairs. Some alumni occasionally return to give lectures or to meet with students, but there is no formal or systematic method of involving alumni in the life of the program.

b. Discuss alumni perception of the program, including program effectiveness (example: alumni survey results, national exams, etc.). The Program has no systematic means of determining alumni perceptions of the program because there are no alumni surveys upon which it can draw to collect such data.

H. Summarize and Evaluate Assessment Findings on Student Learning Objectives

1. In conjunction with your academic unit assessment liaison and CARS assessment liaison, provide an interpretation of assessment findings about the quality of student learning in the program. Focus on interpretation of data, uses of results and dissemination.
a. Include relative strengths and weaknesses of student progress on objectives. The Program developed a pilot assessment instrument in 2009 and submitted its first ever APT in 2011. The Graduate Committee made a number of changes to the pilot instrument in order to enable better measurement of the recent changes made to the program, including the requirement of a thesis, reforms of the course offerings, and the implementation of a world history concentration. Thus, we do not have nearly enough data to draw any definitive conclusions. Nevertheless, the 2011 and 2012 APT suggest that the new thesis guidelines enabled students to complete their work and to complete superior work. Over the last two years, the data suggested that students needed the greatest training in demonstrating ability to use secondary sources to set the historiographical context and in sustaining a thesis in their writing. Nevertheless the sample sizes are far too small to make any changes based on the results. Now that the Graduate Committee has settled on a set rating scale, comparing data across years will become easier, but it will be several years before we can document any meaningful trends (see Appendix G).
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b. Provide the curriculum map from the program's latest Assessment Progress Template (APT) report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Objective 1 Content</th>
<th>Objective 2 Chronology</th>
<th>Objective 3 Collection</th>
<th>Obj. 4.1 Identifying Thesis</th>
<th>Obj. 4.2 Identifying Use of Sources</th>
<th>Obj. 4.3 Identifying Conclusions</th>
<th>Obj. 4.4 Determining Bias</th>
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Coverage objective: 0 = No Coverage; 1 = Slight Coverage; 2 = Moderate Coverage; 3 = Major Coverage
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

c. Highlight how and to whom assessment results were distributed. The Department Head incorporates the Report of the Graduate Program Director, which includes all of the material in the assessment report, into his annual report, which he circulates to all faculty in the department through email. The annual report is also posted to the department common drive and to the department’s faculty Blackboard page. The Graduate Committee holds its own meeting in the fall semester in which it reviews the results and continues to work on the modifications to the program discussed in the APT.

d. Highlight changes made to the program based on assessment results. Because the Program’s assessment instruments are so new, the data that the Program has collected does not yet reveal any statistically meaningful trends. All program changes that the Program has implemented have been through the extensive comprehensive review of the Program that the Graduate Committee conducted in recent years.

H.2. Interpret the quality of the program’s assessment activities.

a. Include the strengths and weaknesses of various assessment elements. We have several assessment instruments in the graduate program, as students are assessed in their required first-year classes, in each individual class, and upon completion of the thesis and oral exams. We pioneered several instruments in 2011, making minor revisions the following year.

Assessment on first-year classes
In 2011 the Department of History’s Graduate Committee devised and piloted a new assessment instrument to measure student performance in all program objectives at the end of their first year in the program. Each student in the first year of the program is required to take three courses: HIST 671 and HIST 653 in the fall semester and HIST 673 in the spring semester. At the end of the academic year, the three faculty members who taught these courses were asked to consult with each other and rate each first-year student on a scale of 1 to 5 on fourteen questions designed to measure student performance and ability in all of the program’s objectives. Faculty also predicted whether each student demonstrated sufficient proficiency to complete a thesis (required of all students in the program) in their second year of study. Faculty based their ratings upon their observations of students in these three required classes, including their performance on all graded written work and oral presentations and oral participation in classroom settings. All faculty measures of students were based on student performance in high-stakes settings.

Though we have changed it since, this 2011 assessment instrument uses a five-point rating scale (1=inadequate; 2=suggests inadequate; 3=suggests adequate; 4=adequate; 5=superior). The scale also included an option, “unable to assess,” for faculty who did not have sufficient information to assess a student on a particular criterion. At the midpoint of the program, we expect the cohort of students to average “adequate” across all elements. In the future, we anticipate that we will be able to compare these midpoint assessment results to the assessment results at the end of the program. This will enable us to determine if students are able to maintain or improve on their ability to meet program objectives during the second year in the program. Since this year was the first time the
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

faculty have used this rubric, we have no empirical data to base this expectation upon currently, but we will revisit this expectation after we have gathered and analyzed data from this year.

Assessment at exit
The MA program in the Department of History uses an exit rubric that measures student performance in all program objectives at the conclusion of the program. Each student in the program is required to write a MA thesis and to pass an oral comprehensive examination. Each student works with a thesis director who directs his or her thesis research and chairs his or her oral comprehensive examination committee. Thesis directors, in consultation with the faculty readers of the thesis and the faculty who sat on the oral comprehensive examination committee, complete the exit rubric for students under their direction. The rubric asks thesis directors to rate their students on a scale of 1 to 5 on fifteen questions designed to measure student performance and ability in all of the program’s objectives. The final question asked the thesis director to rate the quality of the completed thesis. Faculty based their ratings upon their observations of students over the course of the academic year in their ability to meet the standards established in the department’s thesis guidelines (see uploaded document) and their performance in the oral comprehensive exam.

This assessment instrument uses the same five-point rating scale discussed above. As students exit the program, we expect the cohort of students to average “adequate” across all elements and to have maintained or improved upon the cohort average at the midpoint assessment. In the future, we anticipate that we will be able to compare these exit assessment results to the assessment results at the midpoint of the program to determine if students are able to maintain or improve on their ability to meet program objectives during the second year in the program.

The Graduate Committee reconsidered the rating scale that it used in 2011 for the two assessment instruments. It revised the scale for 2012; it continues to use a five-point scale, but it changed how it labels each rating on the scale. The scale implemented in 2011 (1=inadequate; 2=suggests inadequate; 3=suggests adequate; 4=adequate; 5=superior) left too great a gap between “adequate” and “superior.” The new, more accurate scale, is now changed to the following (1=inadequate; 2=suggests adequate; 3=adequate; 4=suggests superior; 5=superior). Adequate remains the benchmark that the Program expects students to achieve.

Now that the rating scale has been changed, the Graduate Committee needs to conduct a faculty training session to establish common standards of measurement to insure validity of the evidence collected. It needs to do this before data are next collected in Spring 2013.

b. Discuss how the quality of the assessment process influences the faculty members’ confidence in the program’s assessment findings. As discussed above, the Graduate Committee needs to conduct a faculty training session to establish common standards of measurement to ensure validity of the evidence collected. Faculty are asked to assess student achievement on high-stakes assignments (thesis, oral exam, seminar papers, in-class performance) so the data should provide fairly accurate measures of a student’s ability and achievement.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

I. Discuss the Role of Faculty in the Program

I.1. Describe program faculty achievements regarding:

a. Teaching and advising History faculty play a very active role in directing and advising student research at the graduate level, and those who serve on M.A. thesis committees also usually serve as members of M.A. comprehensive oral examination committees. In addition, each thesis committee normally consists of three members: a thesis director plus two additional faculty members who serve as the second and third readers on the thesis. The total faculty involvement with student research is significant, and is in addition to a faculty member’s commitments to undergraduate teaching and advising, with some faculty members serving as readers or directors for several theses each year (see Appendix D for a comprehensive list of graduate thesis titles).

Beyond the theses and oral exams, faculty do a great deal of graduate teaching. There are three required graduate-only classes, which usually have 15–20 students each and involve a rotating group of six faculty. We are working to recruit more faculty into this rotation. In addition each semester there are two or three graduate-only seminars in US, Public, and World history, with specific topics depending on student needs and interests. At present we are offering seminars in Early US History and the Atlantic World.

Selected 500-level classes are also available to students as additional options. These are generally add-ons to undergraduate seminars, with the graduate students meeting separately, though precise details vary with the class. In the Fall 2012 semester, we have students taking “American Workers in the Industrial Age,” “Recent America,” “The History Museum,” “Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts,” “Revolution and Social Change in Latin America,” and “East Asian Nationalism” at the 500 level. The graduate sections of these classes are taught above and beyond the professors’ ordinary teaching load.

The Graduate Program Director serves as the official academic advisor of all graduate students in the program. The Program Director monitors graduate students’ progress toward their degrees and communicates with them about degree requirements, deadlines, and other administrative matters. Thesis Directors, however, do a considerable amount of informal advising on top of directing students’ research. A student’s thesis director provides counseling on career plans and aids them in planning and applying for post-graduate internships, employment, and admission to PhD programs. Department faculty are regularly involved in counseling and writing recommendation letters for students applying for jobs, internships, or to graduate and professional programs. In recent years, faculty have helped to place graduates of the Program into PhD programs at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Wisconsin, the College of William & Mary, Rice University, Tulane University, the University of South Carolina, and the University of West Virginia and have placed others in public history employment positions at Colonial Williamsburg, the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, James Madison’s Montpelier, and the Frontier Culture Museum. Other faculty serve as faculty advisors for the online graduate student journal Madison Historical Review, providing mentorship to graduate teaching assistants.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

b. Scholarship and research The faculty in the Department of History demonstrate a high level of commitment to continuing scholarship despite a heavy teaching and service load (See faculty curricula vitae in Appendix J). The relationship between teaching and research is reciprocal: faculty members bring their enthusiasm for and direct engagement with scholarship into the classroom, and to the many graduate and undergraduate theses they advise. Students in turn provide valuable perspectives that faculty then use to fuel their ongoing research.

c. Service and support activities Faculty devote considerable time and energy to helping students in the program in applying for PhD programs in history as well as in other fields of graduate study beyond JMU.

I.2. Document the appropriateness of full- and part-time faculty credentials for the courses they are teaching. Include complete justifications of faculty credentials for the courses they are teaching, such as curriculum vitae, which may be exported from Digital Measures or Tk20 (may be included in the appendix or on a CD).

All faculty hold graduate faculty status. The following minimum criteria must be met for approval as a graduate faculty member: Possession of appropriate terminal degree in his/her field; evidence of current scholarly productivity (within the last six years) as appropriate for his/her field; evidence of successful teaching and/or administration at the graduate level within the last six years; and any additional academic unit criteria on file with The Graduate School for the academic unit. All faculty must apply to The Graduate School to have graduate faculty status and cannot serve on thesis committees or teach graduate courses at the 600 level unless they meet the minimum standards for graduate instructor. The Graduate School vets all applications for graduate faculty status (see faculty curricula vitae in Appendix J).

3. Provide an overview of both internal and external professional development for full- and part-time faculty.

To facilitate research the History department initiated its rotating leave policy in 2007–2008. By adjusting teaching loads so that there is no reduction in the numbers of students taught, the department has been able to provide a one-semester study leave for each faculty member every six years. To facilitate these leaves, the department agreed to increase class size to offset the teaching loss. This leave policy was internally initiated and approved by the Dean of the College of Arts & Letters and the Provost.

The department has made small one-time grants available in recent summers to support the research of some faculty members, but an ongoing fund for publication support does not exist at the departmental, College, or University level.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

J. Evaluate the Quality and Quantity of Academic and Administrative Support

J.1. Address the adequacy of the staffing level of the program, given academic unit and program mission in terms of SCHEV base adequacy levels. Use discipline norms and best practices for comparisons.

Full-time and Part-time faculty At the beginning of the 2012-13 academic year there were 33 full-time history faculty. Over the past few years, faculty teaching power has eroded as colleagues have accepted administrative positions. Chris Arndt now serves as Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Letters and David Owusu-Ansah as Special Assistant to the President. Meg Mulrooney’s teaching role also diminished since she became Associate Dean of General Education. Skip Hyser has become interim Cluster Four Coordinator. Only in the last instance did the department receive a two-year, full-time faculty position. The department has had to turn to adjuncts to address these diminished teaching resources. While the adjuncts can help the department meet its requirements in General Education, the department cannot depend upon them to regularly serve the Graduate Program.

The combination of administrative duties, retirements, and potential retirements is particularly challenging to the public history program. Dr. Dorothy Boyd-Bragg retired at the end of the 2009-10 academic year, and the loss of her position has been a significant blow. Her courses HIST 491/591: Editing Historical Documents and HIST 497/597: Genealogical Research and Family History were two of the nine available primary electives in the LRP concentration. Although she may continue teaching one or both of them in a part-time capacity, she has yet to do so and the Graduate Program cannot rely on her to fulfill these needs. Furthermore, the LRP concentration is very dependent upon the teaching commitments of Clive Hallman and Darryl Nash—two part-time faculty members. Both will retire at the end of this academic year. Professor Nash’s HIST 493/593: Historic Preservation is an essential primary elective for the concentration, and Dr. Hallman’s HIST 402/502: Workshop in Colonial American Life attracts at least one or two graduate students each May, when he offers the course. At the end of the 2010-2011 academic year, Dr. Dan Kerr left the university to accept an appointment at another university. His departure leaves core LRP courses in oral history (as well as his offering in environmental history) at the 400/500 level vacant. The department hired Dr. Evan Friss, who joined the department at the beginning of the 2012-13 academic year, as Dr. Kerr’s replacement. Dr. Friss now offers HIST 495/595 Archives and Manuscripts. Although he will undoubtedly develop other courses, including one in oral history, the oral history component of LRP presently remains uncovered.

Moreover, Dr. Gabrielle Lanier, the Coordinator of the Public History Program, will become the Interim Department Head on August 1, 2013. She is another critical faculty member who will assume administrative duties that will reduce her teaching load. Dr. Lanier teaches three courses vital to the LRP concentration and to the Graduate Program in History: HIST 492/592 American Material Culture, HIST 696 Introduction to Public History, and HIST 673 Writing Seminar. She has also just developed a new course at the 400/500 level called the History Museum. As Dr. Lanier settles on her new rotation as she moves to a reduced teaching load, the Program will need to
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

determine how to cover the courses that she is unable to cover with current faculty. Regardless, the LRP concentration desperately needs additional faculty to make up the retirements of Dr. Boyd-Bragg, Dr. Hallman, and Professor Nash, the departure of Dr. Kerr, and the move of Dr. Lanier into administrative duties. The addition of Dr. Friss, however welcome, is insufficient to meet the demands of the students in the concentration and the aspiration of the program to continue to distinguish itself with its unique concentration in LRP history.

Although the Graduate Program has adopted new courses at the 600 level for each concentration, the program continues to rely too heavily on 500 level courses, which introduce a series of problems for faculty and students alike. For a variety of reasons, adding a fourth hour does not transform an upper-division undergraduate course into a graduate-level seminar. If the course under-enrolls at one or two students, it makes the fourth hour more like a reading tutorial than a graduate seminar. When there are sufficient numbers of graduate students, or if there are several enrolled, faculty and graduate students must struggle to develop a time and place, convenient to all, to conduct the fourth hour. There is no separate meeting time in the class schedule for the 500 level section of the dual-level course, so even when faculty teach these as stand-alone classes, they must scramble for a time convenient to all and for an empty classroom to hold the meetings. Often times, faculty hold the fourth hour at night or in their homes because it is the only compatible time. Graduate students often have limited time available because they are taking one or two other dual level courses, each with its own undergraduate meetings and fourth hours, are attending lectures as part of their assistantship, and conducting discussion sections as part of their assistantship. Some faculty have addressed these problems by making the graduate section entirely separate from the undergraduate section. Some have even, because of student demand, granted several overrides, taking enrollment from three to nine or ten. While this provides an excellent opportunity for graduate students, it comes at the generosity of faculty, is not sustainable as a long-term solution, and can certainly not be expected or demanded of all faculty (especially adjunct and part-time faculty). Because a 400/500 dual seminar counts as only one class in a faculty member’s teaching load, faculty who conduct the 500-level class as a separate seminar have volunteered for an overload in their schedule without just compensation. Students who take a 500-level course under such a scenario only receive credit for a 500-level course, even though the instructor has conducted the class as a 600-level seminar. When several faculty began to conduct 500-level sections as stand-alone seminars, it created expectations among the graduate students that all faculty must approach the fourth hour in this way. Currently, then, there is a lot of imbalance in the way that faculty approach the teaching of dual-level courses, and the Program has not adopted any uniform standards that set boundaries on how faculty are to teach 500-level classes and on what distinguishes 500-level courses from 600-level courses.

Because faculty teaching load in the department is heavily weighted to meeting the department’s obligations to General Education, the history major, and area studies, there is limited room in the schedule to integrate more 600-level seminars without detracting from other commitments. Although we have managed to get HIST 600, 605, 696, and 650 into the schedule, this has often come at the expense of imposing a third preparation on the faculty teaching the 600-level class or has taken them out of offering courses to meet these other constituencies.
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In the end, the program’s viability relies on faculty volunteers to direct theses, serve as readers on theses, chair or serve on oral exam committees, and offer 500-level sections of their 400-level undergraduate courses. Faculty offer these essential services to the graduate program in addition to, not as part of, their regular teaching, research, and service loads. The program survives only so long as faculty believe that the program’s value is worth these extra commitments.

Classified and wage staff and student assistants In the fall of 2009 the department received a second full-time administrative assistant position to address its growing office and bureaucratic demands. Prior to this addition, the department relied upon a shared position with the Political Science Department for more than a decade. Over this time both programs significantly grew in size both in terms of students and faculty. Our established full-time administrative assistant Jane Crockett retired in the summer of 2010, and her replacement, Judith Hollowood, began work that summer. The staff principally serves the department, rather than the Graduate Program, and the Graduate Program Director assumes a considerable amount of clerical work in maintaining student files, processing applications, and corresponding with applicants, especially in terms of generating letters offering admission and assistantships.

Graduate students in the program on assistantship mostly assist faculty in teaching General Education survey classes. Four student assistants aid the office staff.

Graduate and teaching assistants. The Department of History currently has six Graduate Assistant (GA) and three Teaching Assistant (TA) positions, as allocated by the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters. For the 2012–2013 academic year, TA’s are granted nine credits of tuition waiver per semester and a stipend of $8,664.00 for the academic year; GA’s are granted nine credits of tuition waiver per semester and a stipend of $7,382.00 for the academic year. In distributing funding, the Department must maintain a balance between in-state and out-of-state students. The ratio of in-state to out-of-state tuition coverage is determined on a college-wide, rather than a departmental, basis. The college must maintain a 60/40 ratio of in-state and out-of-state, thus the Department generally only is able to award three or four assistantships to out-of-state students each year. This has prevented the program from being able to recruit the best students because it has been forced to award in-state students of lesser ability with an assistantship over more talented out-of-state students. Consequently, the program has not been able to convince all of its top applicants to enter the program.

The department funds an additional fifteen students through its part-time operating budget by providing them with Departmental Teaching Assistantships (DTA’s). These positions pay a stipend of $7400 for the academic year. The DTA positions do not include a waiver of tuition and fees. The department, however, provides DTA’s with a JMU Tuition Waiver Form. The department supports their application, each semester, for a tuition waiver for 3 credit hours, as outlined by University Policy 1402 for part-time non-teaching employees. The Graduate Committee must weigh a number of factors in determining the recipients of those six Graduate Assistantships and fifteen Departmental Teaching Assistantships, including performance to date in the program, the academic credentials of the incoming class, and the ratio of in-state versus out-of-state students. Regardless,
this system, especially the differential tuition rates between in-state and out-of-state students, creates a tremendous imbalance in levels of funding among students and generates sizable inequities among students with limited differences in ability and talent. The stipends are so low that most students receiving DTA’s (and even some on GA’s) take out loans to cover their living expenses. The program desperately needs more fully funded assistantships, especially since all assistants, regardless of level, play a vital role in the teaching of General Education courses.

In recent years, The Graduate School has provided tuition assistance to students in the program who take summer courses. Although the Program does not offer many summer courses, several students have taken advantage of this tuition assistance to enroll in HIST 640 Graduate History Internship, HIST 502 Workshop in Colonial American Life, and HIST 503 Workshop in Civil War Virginia. In addition, the Dean of the Graduate School has approved tuition assistance for students in the Program to undergraduate summer intensive language classes at JMU to help students meet their foreign language competency requirement.

Despite this assistance, funding for students in the Program remains limited because of broader institutional issues that have eroded the Graduate School’s budget for tuition support. The Graduate School budget for tuition, as part of GA support, is increased each year either through new initiative funding for new GA positions established as part of beginning new programs or because of tuition increases. As Reid Linn, Dean of the Graduate School, explains, the net value of TGS tuition budget continues to drop a bit each year for two reasons:

(1) Around the early to mid-1970s, the state approved an annual tuition allocation of $390,222 to JMU for in-state tuition to be used as a tuition match for in-state GA contracts. At that time, this money probably funded the tuition for 100% of in-state GAs at JMU. The university has never sought to supplement these state funds. The result is that as the BOV approves an in-state graduate tuition increase each year, the value of the original $390,222 is reduced further by that amount. To use just one year as an example, when in-state graduate tuition increased 11.15% for 2010-2011, the university would have needed to supplement the $390K with $43,510 to maintain the same support level for GAs. In reality, receiving no supplement effectively reduced the value of TGS tuition budget by the equivalent of 7.13 in-state GA positions. TGS has annually since 2008 recommended that the university begin to supplement the $390K with funds equivalent to the percent of in-state tuition increase so as to stop the continued erosion of GA support.

(2) There is a mathematical error in the formula used by the Budget Office to calculate in-state and out-of-state tuition increases for TGS budget each year. Our attempts, since 2010, to resolve this problem have been unsuccessful. Using the in-state and out-of-state tuition increases for the same academic year as noted above (2010-2011), the TGS tuition budget was shorted by a total of $18,413. In reality, that deficit, that year, was the equivalent of tuition support for one out-of-state GA or three in-state GAs.
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Dean Linn has sought to work collaboratively with various programs across the university to correct these two institutional issues.

**Advising support** With only 35–40 students in the program at any one time, the Graduate Program Director does not require significant advising support. Nevertheless, the Program Director relies extensively on the expertise of the staff in The Graduate School, who perform a range of essential services that facilitate and make the job of advising students in the program smooth and efficient. Debbie Juhasz, and before her Donna Bodkin, have provides outstanding help in monitoring each student’s progress toward the degree and circulating helpful reminders about looming dates and deadlines for applications for the degree to be turned in. Laura Ryman provides essential support in administering Graduate Assistantships and in disbursing additional tuition money to students who qualify for additional assistance. Sheree Will keeps the online application process working and coordinates with the Graduate Program Director to make sure that the system is available for applicants and that it is closed after the application deadline.

2. **Assess the library resources, indicating the levels and quality of access to information.**

JMU Libraries provides collections and services to support the research of Department of History faculty and students at all curriculum levels, with emphasis on serving the undergraduate program. Patricia Hardesty is the liaison librarian assigned to the department; she works closely with the department to develop a library collection (in tangible as well as electronic formats) to support the curriculum. The Department of History has a library representative who acts as the coordinator of information between the library and the department, and who is particularly active in communicating collection development priorities for the department.

The library does not maintain hours convenient for graduate students. It closes over the weekends before and after Thanksgiving, during the winter recess, over the weekends before and after spring break and maintains abbreviated hours during spring break, during the Thanksgiving recess, and over much of the summer. Many of these times, especially Thanksgiving and spring break, are crucial periods of the semester for graduate students. Spring break is a critical time for students are in the midst of completing their rough drafts of their thesis.

Not only do graduate students need access to the library for its collections, but they need the library as a crucial quiet space for study. The library does not assign carrels to graduate students to which students could have books, journals, and interlibrary loan items checked out, and which they could also use as a permanent study and writing space.

*Library Materials Budget* After years of static library allocations, the library materials budget saw steady increases each year from 2004 to 2008. Some of this increased funding has been expended to improve access to electronic databases and journals, but the department has also seen growing allocations for books up to 2008. Table 4 shows annual allocations for monographs and other one-time purchases for history. These allocations are designated for non-serial publications (e.g.,
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

books, microfilm collections, videos), and do not generally include expenditures for journals, research databases, or reference books, which come from other materials fund sources.

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Budget increases allowed the library to phase in new guidelines for allocating each department’s monographic budget. Under the guidelines, the most important factors affecting department allocations are faculty FTE, credit-hour production, and the importance of monographic publications for the discipline. The increases allowed the library to fill gaps in book collections. In the last several years, many out-of-print books have been purchased, with special attention given to primary sources and to areas of teaching and research of new faculty, including the Islamic world, classical history, public history, late antiquity, and Asian history.

The department was able to enhance the library’s primary source research collections. Recent additions have included:

- Digital Sanborn Maps for Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. (online)
- Nineteenth Century Collections Online
- Papers of James Madison (online)
- Trade Catalogs from the Hagley Museum and Library: Transportation (microform)
- The History of al-Tabari (print)
- The Richmond Planet (African-American newspaper, microfilm)
- The Dolley Madison Papers (online)
- Rockingham County Land Tax Lists, 1782-1863 (microfilm)
- Afghanistan Strategic Intelligence, British Records, 1919-1970 (print)
- Women’s Autobiographies from Cambridge University Library, pt. 2. 1780-1889 (microfilm)
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• Africa Through Western Eyes (microfilm)

Due to the economic downturn, the materials budget is expected to remain static or to decrease in the coming year. To prepare for state budget shortfalls, the library has recently evaluated its journal subscriptions, standing orders, and online databases. Several databases were cancelled (none of key importance to history). All departments were required to cut some journal subscriptions, and history eliminated subscriptions to six titles with low usage and high costs, resulting in a savings of over $1,300.

Liaison Library Services
To help guide students to the best resources for research in history, and to aid them in locating and using library resources, liaison librarian Patricia Hardesty maintains a History Subject Guide on the web (see http://guides.lib.jmu.edu/history/). The page features general reference sources, and also contains links to helpful library resources by period, region, and sub-discipline of history. The guide provides easy access to learning objects related to primary sources, citation tools, and contact information for the liaison, who provides research assistance to students and faculty by appointment.

Patricia Hardesty also offers course-related classroom instruction as requested. She consults with faculty before an instruction session to tailor the session-and class guide-to the research project(s) required in the course. These class guides are placed online as a part of the History Subject Guide (see http://www.lib.jmu.edu/history/HistoryClasses.aspx). She has become the best friend of many history graduate students.

In coordination with the liaison librarian, all faculty members in the department participate in the selection of books for the collection. Additionally, the library consults with department faculty when selecting journals for subscription, licensing databases, and before cancelling any subscriptions. The department has recently implemented an approval plan through which books are shipped to the library upon publication, according to a profile worked out by the department. Electronic “slips” and Choice review cards describing and/or reviewing new publications are distributed to faculty for selection purposes.

Research Databases
The JMU library, with the Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA) consortium, together provide access to many core databases for history. Students and faculty are able to access numerous online databases for historical research, including indexing and abstracting resources (such as America, History and Life, Historical Abstracts, and Index Islamicus); online primary source collections (such as British and Irish Women’s Letters and Diaries, the U.S. Congressional Serial Set, Sabin Americana (1500–1926), and Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO); and online reference sources (such as Blackwell Reference Online, Cambridge Histories Online, and the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography). Most online collections of primary source materials have been added since 2004. With a handful of exceptions, students may access the databases from any computer with Internet access. Wireless access is available across most of the campus.
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In addition to facilitating searching of indexes across many years, online access to some resources has expanded the scope of access. For example, with the subscription to Index Islamicus, history students gained access to this scholarly index back to 1906; previously, JMU only held the print volumes back to 1976. From most databases, students are easily able to check for full text articles. An intermediate link resolver will either link to the full text of the needed journal article, or will enable filling out an interlibrary loan form if the item is not available at JMU.

To enable access to primary sources in our online databases, the library often purchases cataloging records which are added to the JMU Library Catalog. For example, the library has purchased the digital edition of *Evans’ American Bibliography*, a collection of 36,000 books published in America between 1639 and 1800. Records for the individual books are included in the Catalog so that a student searching for books by Cotton Mather will discover links to the electronic full text available in the Evans database.

The following is a selection of research databases made available by the library and our consortium, the Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA). Some of these are subscribed annually, while others have been licensed in perpetuity.

*Index and Abstract Databases*
- Academic Search Complete
- Alternative Press Index
- America, History and Life
- l’Année Philologique
- Biography and Genealogy Master Index
- Bibliography of British and Irish History
- C19: The 19th Century Index
- Dissertation Abstracts Online with Digital Dissertations
- Historical Abstracts
- History of Science, Technology and Medicine
- Humanities and Social Sciences Index Retrospective, 1907-1984
- Readers’ Guide Retrospective, 1890-1982

*Primary Source Collections*
- American Broadsides and Ephemera, 1690-1922
- American Civil War: Letters and Diaries
- American Song
- American State Papers, 1789-1838
- AP Images
- ArtSTOR
- Black Thought and Culture
- British and Irish Women’s Letters and Diaries
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- Digital National Security Archive
- Dolley Madison Digital Edition
- Early American Imprints (Evans and Shaw-Shoemaker, 1639-1819)
- Early Encounters in North America: Peoples, Cultures and the Environment
- Early English Books Online (EEBO)
- Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)
- Empire Online, 1492-1962
- North American Immigrant Letters, Diaries, and Oral Histories
- North American Women’s Letters and Diaries
- Papers of George Washington
- Sabin Americana, 1500-1926
- Social and Cultural History: Letters and Diaries Online

*Historical Newspapers and Magazines*
- America’s Historical Newspapers, 1690-1922
- American Periodical Series
- HarpWeek
- New York Times Historical
- Times Digital Archive
- Washington Post Historical

*Online Reference*
- American National Biography
- Blackwell Reference Online
- Cambridge Histories Online
- Credo Reference
- CQ Electronic Library
- Guide to Reference (ALA)
- Historical Statistics of the U.S.
- Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
- Oxford English Dictionary Online

An estimated 90 percent of JMU’s journal holdings are online. JMU and VIVA license many online journal collections, including Cambridge University Press, Oxford Journals Online, Project Muse, and Blackwell-Synergy. JMU currently has access to all available Arts and Sciences collections of journals included in JSTOR (some 800 titles). This resource alone includes over 160 titles in History. A listing of available history and archaeology journals subdivided by region is available at: http://uw8rw3ad9q.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&L=UW8RW3AD9Q&S=SC&C=06. Some of the listed journals are subscribed (with perpetual online access when available) and some are available through aggregator services such as EBSCO Academic Search Complete. The Department of History also benefits from library materials collected for other programs, such as Religion, Environmental Science, Justice Studies, and Political Science.
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Government Documents
Carrier Library has been a selective depository of federal publications since 1973 and an official depository of Virginia state documents since 1978. The collection contains over half a million pieces and a growing number of electronic sources. These publications come from every area of government: education, agriculture, military, commerce, environment, justice, legislation, technology, energy and many more. Records for Carrier Library’s government documents are included in the JMU Library Catalog.

Interlibrary Loan, Article Delivery, Books and Media Delivery
There is no item limit, and no charge to students for the Interlibrary Loan service, through which they may request books, articles, and microfilms from other repositories. In addition, students may request articles from print and microform journals in our own collections, and they will be scanned for them at no cost. Most articles and book chapters arrive electronically, facilitating remote viewing and downloading. The Interlibrary Loan service is highly regarded by JMU students and faculty.

Any registered borrower may request that circulating books and media be delivered to another library location for check out. JMU faculty and staff may also request that items be delivered to their departmental mailbox.

Special Collections
Through its collections and programs, the Special Collections Department in Carrier Library serves the History program. The Program’s mission is:

- To document the Central Shenandoah Valley (the city of Harrisonburg, as well as Rockingham, Shenandoah, Page and Augusta Counties)
- To document the history of James Madison University
- To serve as Carrier Library’s repository for rare, irreplaceable, unique, or otherwise valuable materials which warrant special handling to assure their long-term availability
- To support the use of primary source materials housed in Special Collections within the JMU curriculum and the wider community of scholars

Notable Contributions to the Graduate Program in History include the following

- Guest lectures. The Special Collections Librarian has welcomed class visits for courses (e.g., Public History, Local History, Historical Archaeology) for which an introduction to Special Collections is particularly relevant. Students learn how these repositories function and the types of materials they can expect to find in them, preparing them for research here and at other institutions.
- Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts course. In Fall 2008, the Special Collections Librarian developed and taught this new public history elective for undergraduate and graduate students. It was taught again in 2010 and 2012.

In addition to the specific courses mentioned above, history students from other courses also benefit from Special Collections materials such as manuscripts, archives, rare books and periodicals.
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3. Evaluate the level of technological support necessary to carry out the program mission.

In recent years, Media Resources has installed computing and projection systems in all of the history classrooms. The entire faculty in the department has incorporated these technologies into their courses most commonly to project Power Point presentations and present online content. Faculty have also embraced Blackboard to deliver course materials, hold quizzes, sustain out-of-classroom discussions, have students submit assignments, conduct course evaluations, and facilitate communication. Blackboard, digital projectors, and computers are now essential classroom tools for the department and the Graduate Program in History.

Utilizing Equipment Trust Funds (ETF), the department provides each faculty member with a new computer every three years. Faculty share the office scanners and printers. Jackson Hall was configured for wireless access in the summer of 2010. Needless to say, these items and services are essential for the department to be able to function properly. Using ETF and its own resources, the department has also purchased digital audio recorders, cameras, portable scanners, laptop computers, and portable projectors that are available for faculty and students for checkout. Faculty and graduate students have used the scanners and cameras to assist in gathering materials in their archival research and the recorders to conduct oral histories. They have checked out laptops and projectors for conference and community presentations. The audio recorders and server have allowed for the creation of the Shenandoah Valley Oral History Project. The public history server has also allowed students in several courses to gather and share documents in their collaborative research projects. For examples of how these tools have been used in the classroom, see:

http://publichistory.jmu.edu/svohp
http://publichistory.jmu.edu/Poultry

History faculty present online primary source material, music from the Naxos Music library, oral histories from the public history server, in-house streaming content from JMUtube, and images from MDID in their courses. The benefits of JMU-based applications such as JMUtube and MDID are just beginning to be realized. These platforms should be maintained and further enhanced in the coming years.

Many Department of History faculty and staff have taken advantage of the courses taught through the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) and the Center for Faculty Innovation (CFI) to learn how to use a variety of software packages for departmental, research, and teaching purposes. The staff at CIT have helped faculty develop online courses, digitize and stream materials, and learn how to utilize Google Docs and Pbworks to develop collaborative assignments in their classes. Media Resources provides a useful service for the department by providing digital still and video cameras, audio recorders, and projectors for our students to check out. Dr. Andrew Witmer oversaw the first History Harvest as part of his undergraduate U.S. Religious History class organized in Spring 2012 with CIT and Special Collections. CIT provided the class with training and equipment to digitize documents and artifacts related to the religious history of the Shenandoah Valley collected from...
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

community members. The event produced documents and contacts that may prove very useful to our graduate students. The technology coordinator of the College of Arts and Letters has played a pivotal role in helping the department establish its public history server.

There are areas for significant improvement in the technological support structure that currently exists. Perhaps the most glaring problem until the summer of 2010 was the lack of wireless access within large segments of Jackson. This problem made it extremely difficult for faculty, students, and guest presenters to connect to the JMU network with laptop computers. Furthermore, the technology installed in many Jackson classrooms is beginning to show signs of age in contrast to the equipment available in other buildings. Many of the classrooms lack audio capabilities and document cameras that are essential tools, especially for public history courses that incorporate oral histories and material objects into the teaching. Many other history courses depend upon the availability of audio for video and music presentations.

The History Department website has an amateurish feel to it that is inappropriate as the public face of the history graduate program. The university has not yet made clear when its new web management tool will be made available to departments. One estimate is Summer 2013. Obviously, we would like to see the transition take place as soon as possible. We could also use support from the university in making incremental improvements to the site in the short term, in areas ranging from professional photographs of faculty members to assistance improving the look and content. These are crucial matters for our graduate program, since prospective students gain much of their understanding of the content and quality of our program from our website. A poorly designed and bad-looking website communicates precisely the wrong things about the level of training we seek to offer. In order to maintain and improve the profile of the University and Department, the University should not depend upon an overworked staff to be a jack-of-all-trades. Skilled web designers should instead create a polished template for the department’s web site that can easily be maintained and updated by a staff that can focus its attention on their core responsibilities.

A similar problem can be seen with the Shenandoah Valley Oral History Project website that has been designed and maintained by Dr. Daniel Kerr, who has since left the university. While the site has functioned well for a relatively small number of recordings, as the SVOHP project has grown the site has become unwieldy to maintain and navigate. The site demands a database infrastructure that requires more technical expertise than it is reasonable to expect from a trained historian.

There are signs that the University is beginning to recognize a need to move away from a reliance on the DIY approach and develop a collaborative model. Dr. Gabrielle Lanier and Andreas Knab from CIT have begun working together to create a platform based on MDID 3 that will be able to digitally deliver in an accessible format materials related to the history of the Shenandoah Valley. For potentially high-profile projects such as this, JMU should offer a different level of technological expertise and support than is currently the norm.

The Madison Historical Review website is currently a significant hindrance to our goal of making this an outstanding student research journal. The website was designed years ago by the brother of a former
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e. Its look is neither polished nor professional. It does not announce the quality or seriousness of our intellectual ambitions. We are currently working on incremental improvements, but what we really need is a professional redesign of both the website and the journal itself. The journal is currently posted on the website as a .pdf file, which makes no sense in an online-only journal. We should be taking advantage of the flexibility that being an online journal offers to incorporate images, hypertext, and even videos when appropriate. But for this to happen, we need technical support and guidance.

J.4. Evaluate the adequacy of non-salary based support (e.g. operating budget, grants, foundation money).

The department has seen significant growth in its non-personnel services budget since the 2004–2005 academic year (See Table 5 below). Some of this increase has been essential to address the growing size of the department. However, the growth in the budget has also allowed the department to increase its support for faculty travel to professional conferences and research collections. The department has used these additional funds to purchase software and hardware specific to each individual faculty member’s needs. It has also acquired digital audio recorders, digital cameras, and portable scanners that have been instrumental in supporting students’ and faculty members’ research.

The recent state budget crisis threatens to erode the significant advances the department has made over the last half decade. The department’s 2009–2010 non-personnel services budget saw a cut of 10 percent. Although the cut was restored a year later, the budget has remained flat since 2008–2009. The department has made a concerted effort to continue to fund travel to professional conferences within the existing guidelines and restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth, but it has limited this support to no more than one trip per year with a cap on funding. The department believes that conference travel is essential to sustain the faculty’s productivity as they present their scholarship before their peers. Conference travel helps keeps faculty in tune with the latest developments in their respective fields while also developing national and international recognition for the department. In order to maintain this commitment, the department has had to cut its budget for telephone, mailing, copying, and office supplies to the bare minimum. Faculty requests for software purchases have been denied, and support for educational leaves and summer research grants through the College of Arts and Letters was been frozen for two years before being reinstated at an approximately 50 percent reduction in AY 2011–2012 and 2012–2013. Forecasts for further budget revisions in the future will pose additional challenges for the department in the coming years.

Table 5
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<td>58,433</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2005–06</td>
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<td>(12,226)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>117,349</td>
<td>12,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>117,349</td>
<td>0</td>
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With support from the University and the JMU Foundation, in 2007–2008 the department commenced a five-year campaign to endow fifty student scholarships. Since the drive began, the department has endowed five new History Alumni Undergraduate Scholars Awards: the Clive R. Hallman Undergraduate Scholars Award, the Sidney R. Bland Scholarship, the Raymond C. Dingledine Scholarship, the Mary A. Jackson Award, the Carlton B. Smith Award, the Carlton B. Smith History Graduate Scholars Award, and the Michael Allain Scholarship in Classical Studies. Through its newsletter, History Matters, the department plans to monitor and report on this ongoing campaign. The fundraising activities and the resulting scholarships strengthen the programs by providing financial assistance to worthy student majors.

There are two awards of aid available for graduate history students. The Carlton B. Smith History Graduate Scholars Award is awarded to graduate history majors each semester. The scholarship is only awarded to those students who need to travel to research collections for: 1. the M.A. thesis; 2. a conference paper; or 3. a paper for publication by a recognized journal. Students are eligible to receive the award only once during their academic careers at JMU. The Carlton B. Smith Award is given to the best graduate history thesis submitted to the history department during each academic year. Theses are judged according to their historical research, analysis, and composition. The award is presented annually in late spring and includes theses from the previous spring, summer, and fall. All students participate in the competition. A committee of the Department of History faculty judges entries.

J.5. Evaluate the adequacy of facilities in the program including classrooms, labs, other instructional facilities and office space.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

Perhaps the most significant obstacle facing the Department of History is the physical infrastructure upon which it currently depends. The faculty are divided into offices in Jackson, Cleveland, Roop, Moody, Maury, and Funkhouser. The two full-time office staff work in a confined space in the main office of Jackson. They share this space and the workroom/mailroom/copy room/fax room with one of the four rotating student assistants. The physical division of the faculty makes the work of the staff more difficult and also reduces collegiality within the department. Furthermore, there are no dedicated spaces for the faculty to informally congregate outside of individual offices and the tiny space within the mailroom. This built environment necessitates that nearly all of the conversations within the department take place between two or three individuals at a time. This limitation hinders the faculty from working together to plan the future of the department. Space limitations also create practical problems with department storage, with computer equipment, archived reports, and office supplies jammed into several closets spread over three floors and in multiple rooms in Jackson. Another major problem with Jackson Hall is that there is no part of the building that is accessible to wheelchairs.

Graduate students have a small office space in Roop Hall that doubles as a work space for graduate students and as an office for teaching assistants to meet with their undergraduate students. Graduate students make heavy use of the work stations in the Roop office and desperately need more work stations, including additional computers, printers, and scanners. Graduate students need a dedicated space for TA’s to meet and consult with their undergraduate students. When undergraduates arrive at the Roop office, they often find several graduate students there, which is both intimidating for the undergraduates and distracting to other graduate students using the space for writing and research. The graduate students need more file and storage space. Many students like to keep their books, research materials, and items from interlibrary loan in the Roop office, but there is not enough cabinet and drawer space to provide all students with room for the safekeeping of their work. Because many graduate students live in apartments that they share with two or three other students, they lack good, quiet work space. When Jackson Hall undergoes its renovation, the designers ought to consider a design that would provide each graduate student with his or her own dedicated office space (a desk, computer, printer, scanner, drawers, and file cabinet) whether in a shared office or as a cubicle.

The classrooms in Jackson have been showing their age for years. Nearly all of them are structured in a way that mandates an outdated lecture format. Very few true seminar rooms are available, and seminar classes often must be assigned to classrooms in which the physical layout makes a seminar format nearly impossible. The heating and ventilation systems in the building make many of the office and classroom spaces unbearably hot or cold depending upon the season. This problem creates significant inefficiencies as students and professors have to open and close windows to remediate the problems, and often have to resort to propping them open with whiteboard erasers, books, or pencils. Students routinely complain about problems with the classrooms on their semester course evaluations, and many of our students refer to Jackson Hall as “the slum.” The classrooms are also overcrowded when classes are fully enrolled. The bulky tech consoles, which could be streamlined, exacerbate this crowding.
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

Jackson Hall needs to be renovated. Original projections were to renovate the building in 2012, but that date has been pushed back in the queue several times to 2014 or beyond. Either the building should be expanded in size in the back, or the number of classrooms on the first floor should be reduced if not eliminated in order to allow all of the history faculty to be housed under one roof. The renovation of Jackson needs to increase the work and storage space available to the office staff and should incorporate a dedicated lounge where the faculty, graduate students, and staff can informally gather. Classroom spaces should be restructured to allow for individual desks that can be re-arranged to facilitate either discussions or lectures. Finally, the building needs a heating and cooling system that actually works with the seasons, and it needs to be refitted so that it is in compliance with regulations that require access for the handicapped. The aging facilities and outmoded classrooms that the department must work with present major ongoing impediments to the delivery of adequate classroom instruction. The dispersal of faculty offices across at least four different buildings and the lack of any kind of common gathering space for faculty also make it difficult to maintain a cooperative and collegial environment.

K. Strategic Plan/Initiatives

K. 1. State the program’s strategic plan. Describe how it relates to the university, college, and academic unit.

The Graduate Program in History, being a small part of the Department of History, falls under the academic unit’s strategic plan and thus has no plan of its own. The department’s goal of meeting its strategic plan, however, in terms of adding new resources and facilities, will benefit the graduate program. Since 2008, the Graduate Committee has conducted a comprehensive review and reform of the program (all of which is described elsewhere in the report, both in terms of the genesis and the implementation of the reforms). For details on the department’s strategic planning, plans for implementation, how it will use existing resources to achieve these changes, and how it will set its priorities with additional resources, see pages 90–93 of the department’s 2010 internal self-study (Appendix H).

L. Potential Areas for Additional Review/Consulting

1. Identify two to three areas (in rank order) in which external consulting could benefit the program. These should not be generalities – the program must identify specific needs that will result in measureable outcomes. For example, the program may need assistance in developing a master’s program, managing enrollment or developing hybrid-type instruction. List the areas and provide a brief (two-three paragraphs) justification for each.

1. Does the M.A. program have sufficient resources to fulfill its mission? If not, given current budgetary constraints, what should best be done?
Section III — Academic Program Narrative

a) What level of funding should we be able to provide for our graduate students and how do we reach it? What other resources should we be giving them (in terms of travel funding, office space, etc.)? What internal and external sources of funding exist or can be found to meet these demands and to create new teaching assistantships?

b) In terms of faculty resources, what percentage of faculty teaching time should be applied to graduate teaching and thesis advising, and how can we fairly compensate faculty for this teaching? In particular, how can we better address the staffing shortage affecting the LRP concentration?

c) How do we compare in these regards to other programs of a similar size? What steps can the department and the university take to improve the resources for the graduate program without overburdening our faculty?

Justification: Recent years have brought significant growth for the graduate program, as well as improvement in the quality of program applicants. Our hard-working graduate students provide crucial support to the history department and to the general education program in their capacity as teaching assistants. At the same time, department faculty devote significant effort to graduate-level instruction and advising, and the percentage of faculty directly involved in the graduate program has increased.

In order to sustain the current quality of instruction and research performed by M.A. students as well as faculty, we strive to maximize the level of funding for graduate student assistantships and for the graduate program. Currently, assistantship stipends are low, and graduate students are given inadequate office space for fulfilling their academic and instructional responsibilities.

To mitigate faculty overwork, a problem emphasized by the external review committee during the history department’s 2010 academic program review, we aim to provide systematic credit to faculty for their contributions to the graduate program. Simultaneously, we must respond to retirements and other staffing changes, particularly as they threaten the LRP course offerings essential to the program.

Input from the external review committee will help the department increase its knowledge of practices at other institutions and of the potential resources available for supporting our graduate students and faculty.

2. How can the graduate program best provide career counseling for students in the current academic and economic climate? How can the program best utilize the resources of alumni to educate current students on career opportunities, and how can the program best track alumni placement?

Justification:
Career planning is of paramount importance to our graduate students. The economic recession of recent years has greatly diminished funding for full-time jobs in public history and has restricted
funding for Ph.D. programs and for academic teaching positions. While the graduate program has nevertheless successfully placed its graduates in jobs and PhD programs, these alumni do not typically maintain close correspondence with the department or participate directly in the program after graduation. Because employment patterns in secondary and higher education, the non-profit sector, and humanities fields have been changing rapidly, the experiences of our recent graduates could provide crucial insight that would aid M.A. students and their faculty advisors.

Many universities and professional associations have reacted to the limited job market by considering ways to improve the versatility of historians’ training. The American Historical Association’s meetings and publications have explored ways to expand graduate education and advising so that students are prepared for multiple possible careers. However, many of these efforts focus on the needs of Ph.D. candidates. We seek input from the external review committee on strategies for advising M.A. students on their career planning and for facilitating our students’ access to the career resources developed by professional associations and other institutions.

Detailed data on post-M.A. experiences and a mechanism for corresponding with alumni as informational resources would not only benefit the department’s graduate students but could also assist undergraduate history majors making decisions about future educational and career paths. This complements the history department’s ongoing efforts to provide effective advising and career counseling. In its self-assessments, the history department has analyzed undergraduate majors’ perception of the advising and career counseling they have received.

3. How do we assess the value of recent changes made to the program and the ways we might further strengthen the program? What other reforms might be complementary?

**Justification:**

As detailed in the preceding report, the graduate program has implemented a number of recent curricular changes. In the aftermath of these revisions, students and faculty have noticed positive trends in graduate student performance and satisfaction. Having developed and refined its assessment strategy, the graduate program has begun collecting data that will enable more detailed analysis of such trends. Nevertheless, the size of the graduate program translates into a small sample set that can be difficult to analyze.

As the graduate committee gathers data, we seek to measure the outcomes of such changes as the universal thesis requirement and the increase in 600-level course offerings. Simultaneously, we consider how other components of the program, such as the oral examination process, might be adjusted to best correspond with the current program structure.