Department of History
Program Review Committee Report

The Department of History prepared a self-study following program review guidelines. An external review team (Elisabeth Perry of St. Louis University and William G. Rosenberg of the University of Michigan) visited campus and, after reviewing the self-study, interviewed faculty, students, and administrators. They submitted an external review. The Program Review Committee (PRC) read the self-study and the external review, and met with Department faculty. This document is a report of the PRC’s findings and recommendations.

SUMMARY OF THE SELF-STUDY

Mission and History

Mission. The Department’s mission focuses on research, scholarship, and publication; quality undergraduate teaching; graduate training, with a doctoral program focused on policy history; becoming a focus for the study of policy history; and engagement of students, colleagues, and the public.

Relationship to College and University Missions. The Department’s mission accords well with those of the College and the University. It contributes heavily to general education, and seeks to develop critical thinking processes with regard to both past and present issues. Its courses and faculty provide many services to other programs on campus. It promotes critical thinking about values in both its undergraduate programs and its policy history doctoral program.

History. The Department of History originated in 1929, and established its master’s program in 1935. The doctoral program began in 1973 and awarded its first degree in 1977. The number of tenure-track faculty grew from 12 in 1963 to 27 in 1972 but, consistent with national trends, enrollment and consequently faculty numbers declined during the 1970s. By 1985 faculty size had diminished to 21.

Academic Challenge funds were allocated in 1989 to help develop the policy history focus of the doctoral program, but in 1995 OBOR eliminated state funding for all doctoral programs in history in the state except for Ohio State University and Ohio University. They did not, however, eliminate degree-granting authority, so the Department and the University elected to continue the program with local funding,
including Academic Challenge monies. There are currently 21 tenured and tenure-track faculty, of whom two are on joint appointments with other units. Thirteen of these faculty (10 probationary, 3 senior) have been hired since 1990. The recent hires have resulted in substantial increases in the numbers of female and minority faculty members.

**Description of the Unit**

*Program Identification.* Undergraduates may major in History (a minor is required). A minor in history is also offered, and is required for students in the Integrated Social Studies program in the College of Education and Human Development. The master’s degree is offered in six areas, and the Ph.D. program focuses on policy history.

*Faculty Resources.* In addition to the 21 tenured or tenure-track faculty, all but two of whom are members of the Graduate Faculty, the Department has one full-time instructor. The number of faculty FTEs dropped as low as 16 in the late 1990s. The normal teaching load for faculty who are deemed to be research-active by the Executive Committee is two courses per semester.

*Graduate Assistant Resources.* After dropping as low as 19 in 1998-99, the Department now has 24 funded graduate assistants. The decrease in the late 1990s was due primarily to reduced funding from the Graduate College. The Department has allocated funds for GA stipends from its Academic Challenge budget, which it has kept as a separate budget, to rebuild the number of graduate assistantships.

*Staff Resources.* Since 1996 the Department has lost one administrative assistant, and one secretarial line has been converted from 12 months to 9 months. Currently there are two secretaries in addition to the chair. The reduction in staff resources has increased the Department’s reliance on student assistance.

*Majors and Graduate Students.* The number of majors has dropped from 133 to 93 over the past seven years, but this may be due in part to the enormous increase in the number of minors (from 75 to 480), attributable largely to the requirement of a History minor for Education students majoring in Integrated Social Studies. Majors’ ACT scores have held steady since 1996, but high school grade point averages have increased.

The total number of graduate students dropped from 52 in 1996 to 33 in 2003. This is due to some extent to decreased funding, but the discipline as a whole has experienced a decline in graduate enrollment. Applications to the doctoral program declined rather precipitously, from 13 in 1997 to four in 2002, but the Department has taken actions to increase applications and has succeeded according to early indications; there were 11 applications in 2003. Applications to the MA program are not discussed in the self-study.

Over the course of the reporting period (1996-2003) the undergraduate grade point averages of the graduate students has increased. However, average GRE scores remained fairly constant from 1996 through 2001, then dropped noticeably in 2002 (there are no 2003 data).
Student Credit Hour Production. Both total student credit hours and student credit hours per FTE have remained relatively constant over the reporting period, and compare well with College and University averages. The costs per student credit hour and per FTE student have also remained constant or decreased, while College and University averages have increased. Consequently, according to the most recent (2001-02) data, the Department delivers its education for a cost slightly below the College and University averages.

Recruitment and Retention Efforts. At the undergraduate level the department focuses on accessible advising and career planning services. The Undergraduate Advisor’s appointments are now scheduled by the Department secretary, which increases convenience for students. Social events are also conducted for students. The Department also actively participates in events such as Preview Day, Major Mania, etc., that assist in attracting students and majors. Many majors are recruited from the general education courses, which are usually taught by tenure-track and tenured professors.

Graduate students are recruited through mass mailings, visits to regional campuses, personal contacts, and the Department web site. To reverse the decline in applications to the doctoral program noted above, the Department created and advertised a non-service fellowship, made visits to regional campuses, and revamped its graduate web page. They have also committed Academic Challenge money to graduate student travel. As noted above, these efforts appear to have been successful.

Programmatic and Curricular Offerings. At the undergraduate level the Department offers both a major and a minor in history. The master’s degree is offered in six areas: history; public history; teaching history; and joint programs with French, Spanish, and German. The doctoral program focuses on policy history. Both undergraduate and graduate curricula are undergoing, or recently have undergone, significant revisions.

The Department is a major contributor to general education, with 13 courses satisfying the social and behavioral sciences requirement and two fulfilling the cultural diversity requirement. Several also provide an international perspective. The directors of both the Africana Studies and Asian Studies programs are historians. Two faculty members have joint appointments with other units, eight are affiliated with American Culture Studies, and five are affiliated with Women’s Studies. The Department also has a substantial commitment to the more than 400 Education students who minor in history.

Facilities and Equipment. The Department occupies a total of 27 offices in Williams Hall (21 regular faculty, two shared by emeriti, three shared by graduate student instructors, and one used for storage). It also controls 20 carrels in the basement used by graduate students, in space shared with Sociology and Political Science. Their space includes a heavily utilized conference room, and a computer laboratory for graduate students.
All faculty members have office computers, and the graduate laboratory contains 11 computers. Faculty and students share three laser or inkjet printers and a scanner. The Department website is in the process of being upgraded.

*Information Resources and Services.* The University library has been able to build an excellent collection of books and periodicals over the years, but the immediate future may be problematic due to budget cuts. Some subscriptions have been dropped already, and more losses are possible. OhioLink and Interlibrary Loan are useful but less satisfactory alternatives.

The Department maintains a strong working relationship with the Center for Archival Collections (CAC). The CAC is housed in the library, but there are many connections with the Department in terms of both faculty and programs.

*Financial Resources.* Operating expenditures increased from approximately $85,000 in 1996-97 to $143,000 in 1999-2000, then dropped back to $84,000 in 2001-02. Since the operating budget allocation approximates $30,000 per year, many of these expenses are met by the Academic Challenge budget. Personnel expenses have shown very modest growth over time, both overall and in terms of cost per SCH.

Eight Foundation accounts total $132,000. These accounts are used primarily for scholarships.

Extramural funding has been variable in recent years, but increased in the past two years thanks in large part to a Teaching American History grant from the U.S. Department of Education, earned in collaboration with the College of Education and Human Development, the Hayes Presidential Center, and the Fremont and Toledo school districts. For 2002 and 2003, the Department’s extramural funding totaled approximately $160,000 per year.

*Self-Evaluation*

*Quality.* The Department is very positive about its publication record. It has a good record of producing monographs (the “salient product of scholarship in the historical profession”) with good presses, as well as edited collections. Faculty have averaged about 0.7 articles and chapters per FTE per year. No information is provided in the self-study about the quality of the journals in which faculty members have published. The faculty have won some awards from professional societies and have had considerable success, according to standards appropriate for history, in acquiring extramural funding for research and educational programs.

Over the past decade or so the faculty have become more diverse in terms of age (younger), seniority (more junior), and gender (more females), but race/ethnic diversity is comparable to 1992. However, it is also comparable to the University as a whole.
Average ACT scores of history majors have been relatively constant in recent years, but higher than College and University averages. High school GPAs have been somewhat below College and University averages, but have increased over time, and exceed the mean for the University as a whole according to the most recent (2002) data. Since 1996, the proportion of women has risen (although females still constitute only 39% of all history majors), and the proportion of non-whites has increased marginally but comparably to the undergraduate population as a whole.

Majors progress from introductory survey courses through courses that focus on specific topics and/or periods. The major culminates with the required capstone (HIST 480) research seminar. There is some concern that, because the undergraduate curriculum is not progressive and research skills are not emphasized, students are unprepared to do independent research in the capstone course.

The number of majors has decreased by about 25% since 1996, but the number of minors has risen enormously because of the requirement that majors in Integrated Social Studies in the College of Education and Human Development minor in History. However, the Department makes extensive contributions to the General Education program, with over 60% of its student credit hours generated by lower-division General Education courses from 1996 to 2003. Department policy requires each faculty member to teach at least one lower-division course per year, although their ability to continue this is in some doubt because of the requirement to offer many “Q” and “V” sections of introductory courses. The undergraduate curriculum is currently under review to determine which courses to drop, to address a perceived bias toward Western societies, and to foster the development of research skills in their students.

The Department offers at least half a dozen scholarships for undergraduate students, and provides many opportunities for internships that have been very valuable. They also conducted a survey of current and former students that resulted in many favorable comments but some “pointed criticisms;” the survey, however, consisted of in-depth interviews that have not been systematically summarized.

The Department offers solid training in teaching throughout the graduate program; a new teacher-training sequence is to be implemented next year. M.A. students are required to take courses on historical writing, research methods, and teaching, in addition to substantive courses. Students in the dual master’s programs with the language departments spend their first year in either Austria, France, or Spain. The M.A.T. program has not proven to be popular and is being reconsidered.

The doctoral program requires students to major in policy history. There are five areas of “special strength:” Women, Gender, and Policy; Social Policy; Foreign Policy/International Security; Economic Policy; and The State and State Formation. Three policy courses are required. Students must also declare two minor fields of study. Required research skills involve combinations of foreign language proficiencies and quantitative methods. Eight courses were added to the graduate curriculum in 2003-03, most in the policy history area. The relation between the M.A. and Ph.D. programs is
described as “symbiotic.” Teaching by doctoral students is closely monitored. The Department offers awards to graduate students for outstanding work in both teaching and research.

The undergraduate GPAs of history graduate students have risen since 1996, while GRE scores held steady until 2001 but dropped in 2002. The graduate student population has become more diverse in terms of both gender and race. Students appear highly satisfied with their experiences in the program. Evidence on graduate students’ publications is anecdotal, but indicates some success. The students have organized an important conference, developed an electronic journal, presented papers at many conferences, and participated in a number of internships.

The substantial majority of the 23 students who have completed their doctorates are employed on college faculties. Their employers are largely community and four-year colleges. Several are in non-academic but professional occupations. All are employed. The evidence on the placement of master’s students is more scattered, but many have entered Ph.D. programs while others hold professional positions.

A pilot program, known as the Ohio Policy History Initiative, involves a master’s and a doctoral student working during the summer with the program director on a research project of interest to the Ohio legislature. This work is continued by an undergraduate honors’ class and a graduate class in the fall semester, with a report written in the early spring.

Assessment activities have been ongoing since 1995. Learning outcomes have been specified, and are assessed primarily via evaluation of papers from HIST 480. Earlier assessments suggested that students frequently failed to meet objectives. In consequence, skills-based courses and sections of courses were added to the curriculum. Modifications were made in the organization of introductory courses, evaluation forms, and in student learning objectives to incorporate the objectives of the General Education program. The assessment process also revealed inconsistencies in faculty members’ expectations for students’ work in HIST 480. The Department is now working to discuss and synchronize objectives for the multiple sections of HIST 480, and will modify other courses accordingly.

Assessment of graduate student achievement of learning outcomes (specified in 1996) is ongoing, and consists of evaluations of coursework, thesis and dissertation research, teaching and research assignments, and performance on examinations. No conclusions are offered in the self-study.

Extensive faculty activity in university, professional, and community service is documented.

Demand. Enrollments are healthy in courses ranging from introductory to graduate seminars. Most classes are capped at relatively low levels, but a high proportion of the seats are filled. Many students are neither History majors nor minors.
There is little means of judging employment of history majors. However, training in history is similar to other liberal arts in offering a variety of generalizable and valuable skills. Doctoral graduates since 1996 are all employed, virtually all in professional positions. No mention is made here of master’s students.

The faculty are extensively involved in service across campus and in the profession.

_Centrality to University Mission._ The undergraduate program trains historians and contributes to General Education. It also plays a vital role in the training of public school teachers. The policy history focus makes the doctoral program unique. The high-quality research and service also contributes.

The History program is closely connected to many others on campus through instruction and administration.

Training in history is a central component of a liberal education, in terms of both substantive understandings and the development of usable skills.

Research informs instructional programs at both graduate and undergraduate levels. Faculty research specialties guide undergraduates in HIST 480 to do their own research.

Faculty service to other programs on campus contributes to interdisciplinary perspectives in the classroom.

_Comparative Advantage/Uniqueness._ Students served are typical of Ohio college students, but diversity is increasing. The undergraduate curriculum is distinctive in the service it provides to other programs, particularly the required minor for Integrated Social Studies majors in Education, and the relatively small size of classes that are frequently taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty. The doctoral focus on policy history is unique. There is no serious duplication with other programs.

_Financial Considerations and Adequacy of Resources._ Costs per student credit hour are [slightly] below average for the University. Faculty resources are generally adequate, but there are gaps in the coverage of important areas (e.g., military policy/conflict resolution; local history) that should be filled. The requirement of teaching more small sections of introductory courses will increase pressure on faculty teaching time. Nine faculty are age 55 or over, indicating the upcoming need for retirement replacements. Office staffing is somewhat problematic; they would benefit from returning the 9-month secretary to a 12-month position. Office space is generally adequate, but the periodic flooding of basement offices is a major problem that needs to be resolved. Many faculty computers are aging beyond the point of utility, as are the computers in the graduate student laboratory and those available to graduate instructors. The operating budget is low and hasn’t been increased for many years, but is adequate because it is supplemented with Academic Challenge money. However, there is no room for further decrease.
Unit Planning–Goals and Strategies

**Goal 1. To produce historical scholarship and publications of national and international repute.**

This is a matter of maintaining the current level of productivity. It depends to some extent on maintenance or expansion of faculty size.

**Goal 2. Develop a broad-based and flexible undergraduate history curriculum that imparts specialist knowledge and academic skills; stresses international, multicultural, and comparative understanding of human societies; and fosters the student inquiry, engagement and achievement so crucial to liberal arts education.**

The curriculum must be revised to impart research skills earlier in the program. The lack of prerequisites for most undergraduate courses will be re-examined. Efforts will be made to expand the number of majors, in part by helping locate career opportunities.

**Goal 3. Establish a Graduate Program of high quality and a Doctoral Program strategically centered on Policy History that ground our students in historical knowledge and practice, and foster inquiry, engagement and achievement, while training them for a variety of careers from the academic to the public.**

Review of the graduate program is ongoing. The M.A.T. program will be reconsidered in light of its low enrollments; a pass-through M.A.-to-Ph.D. program will be explored. More efforts will be focused on recruitment to the doctoral program. Teacher training will be improved, specifically by returning to the “experimental section” model in which several graduate students and a professor plan a course together and coordinate their teaching of multiple sections.

**Goal 5. Build a premier center for the study of, research in, and publication of Policy History.**

This involves continued development of the Ohio Policy History Initiative, which includes course development at both undergraduate and graduate levels, internships, and engagement with the state legislature and other external bodies.

**Goal 6. Engage extensively with our students, our colleagues across the campus, and in the public sphere.**

This involves continuing and expanding the Department’s role in the College and the University. Critical foci of contributions include the General Education program and the History minor for Integrated Social Studies majors. Service to the profession is also important.

This section is followed by a time line for implementing strategies to pursue each goal.
SUMMARY OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

Overall Assessment

The external reviewers believe that the Department is strong and in good shape. However, there were some gaps in the information they received, including a lack of literature on the Policy History doctoral program, examples of “Working Papers,” and a clear and navigable web site.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Self-Evaluation

Weaknesses include under-representation of several important areas of historical inquiry, and the relatively low profile of the Policy History doctoral program. The self-study should have included more information regarding (a) the undergraduate curriculum; (b) course enrollment pressures; (c) graduate recruitment; (d) faculty governance; and (e) joint appointments. There is also concern that the faculty may soon be fully tenured. However, the scholarship of the faculty is very good.

The Faculty

Both junior and senior faculty have good records in research and service. The current hiring freeze prevents filling gaps in the curriculum (specifically ancient, medieval, and early modern Europe). A joint appointment, probably with Political Science, in national security policy would also be helpful.

There is some tension between junior and senior faculty. Some junior faculty believe the senior faculty receive preferable teaching assignments. The service obligations of junior faculty also seem excessive. Mentoring relationships need to be formalized. Non-tenured faculty need a semester free from teaching immediately prior to consideration for tenure. The merit system provides little reward for directing independent studies and internships. There is no clear policy on grant release time.

Undergraduate Teaching and Curriculum

The undergraduates are generally happy with the program and the faculty. Their major complaint is that some courses in the catalog are not offered or offered infrequently. Syllabi and “course books” could be added to the web site to improve the flow of information to undergraduates. The Policy History doctoral program has no visible impact on undergraduates. Faculty and graduate students teaching the 151/152 sequence need to agree on the contents and boundaries of these courses to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness. Majors can define concentrations only by geographic area, not by chronology or theme.

Handling the large number of Integrated Social Studies majors as minors causes several problems. These students fill upper-division courses, to the extent that History majors
have difficulty getting the courses they need to graduate. The Department should consider having graduate students teach more 300-level “topics” courses, and/or adding more sections of the capstone (480) course.

**Graduate Teaching and Curriculum**

The Policy History doctoral program is a strong “niche” program. The graduate students are impressive, and generally well satisfied. The program could benefit from a clear definition of policy history, and from efforts to raise its national profile. The graduate students’ primary complaint is that not enough seminars are offered in the area. They suggest that they teach more undergraduate courses to free the faculty to offer more seminars.

**Governance**

*Committees.* Department committees need to meet on a regular rather than an ad hoc basis, and perhaps include graduate students. The Curriculum Committee doesn’t consider course assignments, which are an issue for junior faculty. Some faculty see governance as too centralized. A greater sense of community among the faculty might be produced by involving the faculty more in departmental governance. The Executive Committee should review teaching assignments. A majority of the Executive Committee should be elected, and voting should be restricted to the elected members.

*Evaluating the Faculty.* The merit point system discourages evaluation of the quality or impact of scholarly productivity; a qualitative dimension should be introduced into the merit process. More weight should be given to exceptional service and teaching. The fact that the Evaluation Committee includes associate professors is a problem because the Committee votes for promotions to full professor; such votes should be restricted to those already at that rank.

*Transparency in Expectations Concerning Teaching, Service, and Research.* While overly rigid requirements for promotion and tenure are undesirable, expectations should be as clear as possible. At this point, criteria for promotion to full professor appear to be particularly obscure. A semester free from teaching should be granted to untenured faculty at least a year prior to consideration for tenure, and occasional course relief should be made available to associate professors to prepare for promotion to full.

**The Department’s Strategic Planning and the Policy History Questions**

The Department’s planning is excellent. However, it needs to pay more attention to its roles in interdisciplinary programs. Consideration should be given to joint teaching with faculty in other programs. The Policy History program should be strengthened by clearly conceptualizing what policy history is, by producing new literature focused strictly on that program, and by redesigning the web site to improve its visibility. The Department has a good record of placing graduates. This could be strengthened further by expanding internship opportunities, creating connections to scholars from other policy-related
disciplines, and developing connections to policy makers in state and national government. All of this could be facilitated by creation of an Institute, as proposed in the next section.

**An Institute for Policy History and Studies**

BGSU has a number of units and programs concerned with policy, including the Center for Family and Demographic Research, the Center for Policy Analysis and Public Service, the Social Philosophy and Policy Center, and a concentration on policy in Environmental Studies. An overarching Institute for Policy History and Studies (IPHS) could help to integrate teaching and scholarship in policy matters; create an undergraduate concentration in policy history and studies; coordinate seminars and lectures; sponsor an annual seminar by a major figure in policy formation; seek grant funding; facilitate the creation of internships; and coordinate graduate student recruitment. Costs are an important consideration, but should be minimal.

**Summary and Conclusions**

The Department has a strong faculty at all levels and enthusiastic students. Strengths include the roles the Department plays in other university programs; strong advising; quality of leadership; and national and international involvements of the faculty. Concerns involve the need for curricular reform, the strength of the Policy History program, the need for greater transparency in governance procedures, and the need for additional coverage in some areas of historical inquiry.

**PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Department is to be congratulated for its excellent record of scholarship; its extensive contributions to undergraduate education at the University; and the development of a strong and distinctive doctoral program in policy history. In general, faculty members are both teachers and scholars. They are working hard both individually and collectively to offer outstanding educational programs and to contribute to the knowledge base of their discipline. There are, however, several issues the Department should address.

1. **Undergraduate Majors and Minors**

   *Findings.* The number of undergraduate majors has dropped to a fairly low level for a faculty of this size. The self-study attributes this drop to a concomitant increase in the number of minors, most of whom are Integrated Social Studies majors in the College of Education and Human Development. However, the decrease in the number of majors clearly preceded the increase in the number of minors (see tabular presentation on p. 8 of the self-study). The PRC does not view the decline in majors as problematic (although further declines could be so), in part because the minors help to ensure that most undergraduate courses offered by the Department are fully enrolled. But the Department
struggles to offer a sufficient number of sections of HIST 480 to satisfy the demand they create. The PRC believes that HIST 480 is an essential course for future teachers, and that to be effective it must continue to be taught in small classes.

Recommendations. The Department, with the assistance of the Dean of Arts and Sciences, should open/continue discussions with the College of Education and Human Development regarding faculty resources to teach the large number of minors enrolled in their program. Such resources could take the form of a joint appointment with EDHD. In addition, the Department should offer more sections of HIST 480 in the summer to help satisfy the demand created by the minors.

2. General Education Courses

Findings. The Department is doing an excellent job of offering General Education courses, and it serves a large number of students very well in this capacity. However, a total of fifteen separate courses satisfy General Education requirements, at levels ranging from introductory (100) to advanced (400). This spreads out student demand for History General Education credits across a large number of courses, and means that History majors and minors take their upper-division courses jointly with General Education students. Although most General Education students are taught in lower-division courses, the fact many that upper-division courses carry General Education credit constrains the Department’s ability to sequence these courses for their majors and minors or to establish and enforce prerequisites for advanced courses.

Recommendations. As part of their ongoing curricular revision process, the faculty should consider whether all fifteen of the General Education courses they currently offer, particularly the upper-division courses, actually meet the objectives of the General Education program. It might be possible to meet these objectives with a smaller number of courses taught in somewhat larger sections, thereby concentrating the demand. This would increase the capacity to offer more courses to audiences of majors and minors, and allow these courses to be effectively sequenced. The Department should report progress on this to the Dean by spring semester 2005.

3. Learning Assessment

Findings. The Department appears to be doing good work in the assessment of its undergraduate program. It has thoroughly examined the degree to which its learning objectives are attained, has modified those objectives appropriately, and has made some alterations to its undergraduate program in response to these assessments, particularly by introducing experimental “skills-based” sections of several undergraduate courses. However, it is unclear exactly what made these sections “skills-based,” and whether the experiment was successful. Also, assessment of the graduate program is limited to reporting placement rates of doctoral graduates. The learning outcomes are appropriate, and most of the necessary assessment procedures are in place, but little has been done to implement these procedures, analyze the results, or modify the program in light of the results.
Recommendations. Assessment of the undergraduate program should continue, with annual reports to the dean’s office and the Student Achievement Assessment Committee (SAAC). The same kind of dedication should be applied to assessment of the graduate program, including the M.A. as well as the Ph.D. The faculty should consider having samples of theses and dissertations read and evaluated by external reviewers. Annual reports should be made to the deans of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College of the extent to which master’s and doctoral students are achieving the learning objectives of the graduate program. These reports need to go beyond placement rates to assessment of the extent to which students are actually developing the skills, abilities, and knowledge stipulated in the learning outcomes.

4. Undergraduate Curriculum

Findings. The self-study expresses concern that majors and minors arrive at the capstone course (HIST 480) with inadequate preparation to carry out independent research projects, and that consequently the experience is more difficult and less productive than it might be. There is also considerable variation across instructors in objectives for the course and expectations for students. This reflects some confusion about the role of HIST 480 in the curriculum, which is manifest in two ways. First, although it is considered to be the “capstone” course, students are required to take it by the end of their junior year; however, most apparently take it later. Second, according to the catalog description, the course is “Designed to introduce majors to methods and problems in historical research” (italics added); if this is the introductory methods course, it is not surprising that students are unfamiliar with these methods prior to taking it. The confusion, then, involves whether the course is intended to be a mid-career introduction to methods of historical research, or a true capstone course that allows students to apply what they have learned over the course of their undergraduate careers to a summative, final research project that demonstrates their capacities for guided but independent scholarship.

This is symptomatic of a certain lack of organization in the curriculum for majors and minors that has become apparent to the faculty through the learning assessment process. If HIST 480 is to serve as a true capstone course, students need to be introduced to methods of historical inquiry prior to enrollment in this course, and have opportunities to hone and exercise these skills on smaller papers before embarking on their capstone projects. At this point it has no prerequisites; in fact, the only history course that has a history course as a prerequisite is HIST 455. This implies that historical knowledge is non-cumulative. In theory, HIST 480 could be a student’s first history course. Requirements for course selection are entirely distributional, ensuring that students take courses across a variety of levels and topical areas. Also, as noted above (Item 2), many upper-division courses carry general education credit, and thus contain general education students mixed in with majors and minors. This limits the extent to which methods of historical inquiry can be taught in these courses, and the extent to which courses can be sequenced.
Recommendations. (a) The Department should investigate ways that history majors and minors could be introduced to methods of historical research relatively early in their programs. This introduction could take the form of either units on historical methods in lower-division courses, one or more of which would then be prerequisites for upper-division courses; or a required methods course for majors and minors that would be a prerequisite for HIST 480 and possibly other 400-level courses. HIST 480 should then be offered to students in their senior years, as a true capstone course. (b) The Department should thoroughly consider ways in which courses within given topical areas could be sequenced, offering opportunities for the accumulation of knowledge and for making connections across courses. Options should be considered and reported to the dean by spring semester 2005.

5. Master’s Program

Findings. The Department offers the Master of Arts degree in three areas; it also offers three dual degrees in collaboration with foreign language departments. None of these areas is policy history, which is the focus of the Ph.D. program. There is no report of the number of students pursuing each option, except a mention that the M.A.T. program has attracted little attention and is being considered for termination. The self-study provides relatively little information about the master’s program. In particular, its articulation with the policy history doctoral program, or lack thereof, is not systematically addressed. Based on the information available to us, the M.A. and Ph.D. programs appear to be largely disconnected.

Given this lack of information, the PRC has questions rather than findings regarding the master’s degree programs.

a) What relationship between the master’s degree and the doctoral degree would be appropriate and beneficial to students and to the program?
b) Would a policy history specialty at the master’s level, or a pass-through M.A.-to-Ph.D. program be of value?
c) What weight is given to policy history issues in seminars on other substantive topics taken by M.A. students?
d) How can the master’s degree program be structured to benefit recruitment to the Ph.D. program?
e) Could alternative structures for the M.A.T. program (e.g., interdisciplinary, in collaboration in with other departments and colleges) produce a more vigorous program?
f) What is the relationship between the graduate curriculum and the undergraduate curriculum, not only in terms of content, but in terms of impact on teaching resources?

Recommendations. The PRC recommends an extensive review of the M.A. program, including its relationship with the Ph.D. program. The review should address the questions raised above in the findings about the master’s program, as well as other issues important to the history faculty. Results of this review should be reported to the deans of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College by fall semester 2005.
6. Policy History Ph.D. Program

Findings. The Ph.D. program in policy history has the potential to become nationally recognized; however, vigorous efforts must be undertaken in visibility and recruitment for the program to achieve its potential. It has appropriately defined its niche, and departmental resources have been effectively devoted to building strength in policy history. It is one of a very small number of such programs in the country, and has been successful in placing its graduates in both academic and non-academic settings. However, demand for the program has not been demonstrated; there have been as few as three applications to the program in 2002. While the number of applications rebounded to a respectable level in 2003, the small numbers, in the context of declining enrollments in history graduate programs across the country, are worrisome. The external reviewers found information about the policy history program to be quite fugitive; the program will not prosper unless the program’s visibility is improved. Because policy history is the sole specialty offered by the doctoral program, the Department must ensure that it attracts sufficient numbers of students to remain viable.

Recommendations. Efforts must be continued and expanded to attract a larger number of qualified applicants to the doctoral program. In part this must involve improvements in publicity, through the production of literature specific to the policy history emphasis, improvements to the Department’s web site (both accessibility and content), and other efforts to make potential students and their faculty advisors aware of the program, its specific nature, and its potential to lead to rewarding careers. The Department must also pursue creative ways to increase stipend levels, to ensure that we are competitive for the best students. The Department should report annually on its efforts to attract students, and the success of those efforts, to the deans of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College.

7. Faculty Research Productivity and Workload Policy

Findings. As a group, the faculty appear to be doing a good job of producing articles in refereed journals, chapters in edited books, and monographs. The latter is the primary outlet for scholarly work in history, to a greater degree than in most other fields, and many faculty have published influential books with prestigious publishers. There is some lack of detail in the self-study about the quality of journals in which faculty have published and on how their rate of publication of articles, chapters, and monographs compares with similar departments. The Department has an excellent workload policy, in which the Executive Committee makes judgments about faculty members’ research activity and assigns reductions from the nominal three-three teaching load accordingly. However, we see relatively little evidence in the report of faculty teaching loads (Appendix 1.3) that this policy has been used effectively; the actual teaching load has been two-two (or less, depending on administrative assignments) for virtually all faculty in recent years. We recognize that productivity in historical research is often the result of long-term projects that do not bear fruit each year. Nonetheless, there is clear unevenness in faculty research productivity that is not reflected in teaching loads. This limits the
ability of the Department to capitalize on the varying talents and proclivities of each faculty member.

**Recommendations.** The Executive Committee, with the assistance and ultimate approval of the faculty, should examine the criteria it uses to determine the appropriate balance between teaching and research for each faculty member. Tenured faculty who are not actively engaged in research projects, or less actively engaged, should have appropriately higher teaching loads. We recognize that most faculty are active and productive in research, so this will result in a small number of additional classes. Nonetheless, these classes could be used to (a) increase the number of upper-division “topics” courses or sections of HIST 480; (b) increase the number of graduate seminars offered; or (3) selectively reduce teaching loads for other faculty members working on major research projects or grant proposals, or who are nearing consideration for tenure. The Department should report to the dean annually on the relation between research productivity and teaching load for tenured faculty members.

8. Faculty Resources

**Findings.** The external reviewers suggest that there are important gaps in the curricular coverage of historical knowledge (e.g., ancient, medieval, and early modern Europe), although the Department argues that these areas are in fact covered. However, the Department identifies a somewhat different set of unfilled needs, in military history/conflict resolution and local history. It also recommends a position in national security policy, perhaps involving a joint appointment with the Department of Political Science. In addition, a joint appointment with the College of Education and Human Development to assist with the large number of Integrated Social Studies majors who minor in history is under consideration (see Item 1). Teaching resources are spread thinly by the need to staff large numbers of general education and lower-division courses, and multiple sections each semester of HIST 480 for majors and minors. Given current budgetary constraints, the faculty is unlikely to grow substantially in the immediate future, so choices in the deployment of available faculty resources are critical. At this point, no clear plan has been formulated that articulates how future hires will help the Department achieve its goals.

**Recommendations.** The Department needs to develop a plan for future hires that specifies whether it will use such hires to fill identified gaps in coverage or to build on and expand current strengths. As part of this plan, the potential for some of the undergraduate teaching load to be covered by instructors or others on term appointments should be considered. This plan should be developed in the context of curricular reform at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It should be submitted to the Dean of Arts and Sciences by spring semester 2005, and updated annually.

9. Department Governance

**Findings.** There are some indications of tension between junior and senior faculty regarding teaching assignments, service loads, and the criteria for promotion and tenure.
(a) The external reviewers report that some junior faculty feel that the senior faculty receive preference in the assignment of courses and times. To resolve perceived tension regarding teaching assignments, the Department proposes involving the Executive Committee in the process. (b) The reviewers also perceive a high level of service among junior faculty, perhaps to the point of interfering with their productivity in teaching and research. (c) Both the faculty and the external reviewers are concerned about the clarity (or ambiguity) of criteria for promotion, although the sense of the Program Review Committee is that they are sufficiently clear and adequate. Overly rigid, “objectified” standards for promotion and tenure often lead to decisions based too heavily on quantity, with insufficient consideration of quality, impact, or actual contribution to the discipline. However, because the Evaluation Committee consists of both associate and full professors, associate professors vote on promotions to full professor; this is an unusual practice that can lead to a variety of problems. (d) Finally, the roles of major committees in decision-making seem somewhat unclear.

Recommendations. (a) The PRC does not agree that the Executive Committee should be involved in teaching assignments; we think this would be needlessly time-consuming and awkward. We suggest that the chairperson continue to assume the responsibility for making teaching assignments, and report to the faculty the degree to which junior and senior faculty (as categories, not as individuals) receive assignments in accord with their preferences. If individual faculty members feel they have been consistently assigned less desirable courses or times, the Executive Committee could serve as a mediator. (b) Service assignments for untenured faculty should be held to a minimum. Mentoring of junior faculty might be done by small (e.g., three-person) committees, appointed by the chairperson in consultation with the junior faculty member, rather than by individuals; this minimizes the chances of ineffective mentoring due to unfortunate pairings. (c) Votes on promotion should be restricted to faculty at the targeted rank or higher; that is, only tenured associate and full professors should vote on tenure and promotion to associate, and only full professors should vote on promotion to full. (d) The roles of the Executive Committee and the Curriculum Committee should be examined and codified, with a report to the dean by fall semester 2005.

The Department of History should report annually to the Dean of Arts and Sciences, with a copy to the Provost, on the implementation of these recommendations.