

PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Spring, 2014

History

Goals, Objectives, and Activities

History is the study of the past by examining evidence in an effort not only to analyze and understand but also to interpret. Since historians do not always agree about interpretation, history is a lively search for truth that helps people to understand the relevance and meaning of the past. This effort is undertaken for the development and dissemination of knowledge to improve society and the intellectual and social development of individual students at the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

The specific goals of the history program/major include:

1. To prepare students for careers in history, including the pursuit of graduate and/or professional post-baccalaureate education;
2. To provide courses for students in other disciplinary studies;
3. To further research in the field of history in order to provide up to date and accurate information and to reflect accurately the current status of the field of history as a discipline and field of study;
4. And to engage in historical projects and community outreach that benefit the region and to maintain contact with regional, state, national and international historical projects through active involvement in professional activities and associations.

The history department meets the above mentioned goals by offering mainly undergraduate course offerings in its two main fields of concentration: American history and world history.

The faculty of the history department teaches a minimum of 50 percent general education

courses; 75 percent as part of the teaching load is customary. History courses thereby meet the university's general education requirements in addition to supporting its B.A. Identity Requirement. The B.A. Identity Requirement applies to any Bachelor of Arts degree and includes at least six hours of one foreign language and six hours from a prescribed list of courses (found in the University catalog) that expose students to a diversity of thought and communication. As such, the majority of students at UAM will take at least one history course prior to graduation regardless of major. For its history majors, the department offers frequent opportunity for travel-study courses as well as field work through the University's "Horizon Program." In addition, faculty members are expected to actively participate in a scholarly way in the field of history by attending conferences, presenting papers, and publishing. Faculty members in the history department display a healthy publishing record over the past decade including important contributions in the areas of U.S. Civil War history, U.S. civil rights history, the history of nationalism in Spain, and other important contributions in American and world history. The department further demonstrates active and ongoing participation in the furtherance of the discipline of history through undergraduate participation in scholarly conferences both within and outside the state of Arkansas. In addition to publication and conference attendance and presentations, history faculty have also been engaged in the study and preservation of important historical sites in the state including the Hollywood Plantation House (Winchester, Arkansas), the X.O. Pindall Law Office (Arkansas City, Arkansas) and the Italian Prisoner of War Camp (Monticello, Arkansas), each of which has been designated an "historical site," the management and care of which has been given to the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Finally, history faculty demonstrate active support and participation in the overall goals and objectives of the University of Arkansas at Monticello through their serving the university as

faculty sponsors of undergraduate honor societies and/or student organizations, through their committee work in various capacities within the university community, and their representation of the University through their membership and participation in various historical professional organizations such as the Arkansas Association of College History Teachers, the Board of Directors of the Arkansas Humanities Council, and the Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society.

According to the Arkansas State Department of Education's Education Renewal Zone for the southeastern quadrant of Arkansas, there have been between four and eight employment openings in the history field in this southeastern area in the last three years. Since 2008, thirty UAM (history major and minor) graduates have been accepted into the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) program operated by the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Many of these graduates are currently teaching history at the secondary level.

Generally, the history major supports the development of students who will not only go on to teach history at the secondary and college level, but will move into private and government careers in historical editing, museology, historical preservation, and other related fields. The history major, through its practice and development of critical thinking skills, reading, writing, interpretation, and research skills also prepares students for post-baccalaureate degrees not only in history but in the humanities in general.

For general education, the history department documents a significant participation rate among UAM students over the past six years in two core history courses, HIST 1013 Survey of Civilization I and HIST 1023 Survey of Civilization II, as evidence of the program's ongoing need and viability. According to its self study, nearly 30 percent of all UAM enrollees have taken either one or both of these courses in furtherance of their educational goals. With

psychology and sociology, these history courses continue to be the most popular courses in terms of meeting elective general education requirements.

Student demand for the history program has remained relatively constant over the past ten years. As can be seen from the table below, there are approximately 30-40 students each year enrolled as history majors. This stability is due, in some part, to the stable demand and opportunities for graduates including graduate and professional schools and careers in education, government and public service.

<i>Year</i>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<i>Majors</i>	40	30	39	34	35	31	30	32	40	42

Curriculum

The history program content parallels current thinking and trends in the field of history in the following ways:

1. As the field of history has moved away from a “western civilization” approach to teaching history, the history department has altered its introductory courses to reflect this shift by offering a more multi-cultural encounter with the complexities of world history;
2. By incorporating more writing and critical thinking assignments in their courses, the faculty have moved away from the more traditional method of examination as the sole means of assessment, reflecting current changes in the approach to teaching and assessing within the field;
3. Further reflecting changes in the field of history, UAM faculty members are developing upper-division courses that, rather than concentrating on one country and its political history, engage students in comparative, thematic, and interdisciplinary approaches to learning about history. Hence, newer courses concentrate on regions and historical

movements as reflected in HIST 3403 Emergence of Modern Europe or HIST 3503 Middle East and North Africa, to take two recent examples. Thematic and interdisciplinary offerings include HIST 349V: Communism and Fascism, HIST 349V European Popular Culture, and HIST 349V Africa through Fiction;

4. The history department offers face-to-face lecture and seminar style courses, hybrid courses, and online courses. Each of these courses incorporate a variety of new technologies in the ongoing effort to “make history come alive” including PowerPoint, the incorporation of film and/or music and auditory technology, internet streaming and the like. As the field of history itself has been slow to embrace new technologies, the faculty at UAM has attempted to be forward thinking regarding incorporating technology in their courses.

The Bachelor of Arts in History requires satisfactory completion of 120 hours of course work. All 120 hours must be in courses numbered 1000 or above. Included in these 120 hours is a 35-hour general education requirement. Also included in the 120 hours is a 12-hour institutional requirement, the B.A. Identity Requirement, defined earlier in this report.

The history major requires 33 hours of history coursework:

- HIST 1013 Survey of Civilization I
- HIST 1023 Survey of Civilization II
- HIST 2213 American History I
- HIST 2223 American History II
- HIST 3513 Historiography and Historical Methods
- 9 hours of electives in American history (must be 3000-4000 level)
- 9 hours of electives in non-American history (must be 3000-4000 level)

History majors are also required to select a minor which requires a minimum 18 hours of coursework in another field.

The history minor requires 21 hours of history coursework:

HIST 1013 Survey of Civilization I
HIST 1023 Survey of Civilization II
HIST 2213 American History I
HIST 2223 American History II
9 hours of electives in history (must be 3000-4000 level); of these,
3 hours must be in American history and
3 hours must be in non-American history

The history faculty continually reviews the curriculum to ensure that course offerings are reflective of the current knowledge base. The other main objective of review and revision of the curriculum is to ensure that courses are offered which reflect the current focus of the discipline especially as reflected in the current research of faculty members.

When history faculty need to introduce new courses or make catalog adjustments to current courses, the standard University protocol is followed. After discussion and the formation of specific proposals by the faculty, all program changes are reviewed by the Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Approved proposals are distributed to the Academic Council, allowing other program deans to be made aware of proposed changes. Following Academic Council approval, proposals are passed to the university Curriculum and Standards Committee. Following approval, the proposed changes are voted on by the faculty Assembly and approved by the Chancellor of the University. Proposals that involve major changes, such as a 15-hour change in the major, would require approval by the University Of Arkansas System Board Of Trustees and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Final approved changes are incorporated into the official UAM catalog.

Instructors interact with students in distance courses through online content delivery, assessment, discussion boards, and e-mail using the Blackboard learning management system. In addition, students may communicate with faculty and each other in person and through

telephone contact. Instructor expectations, learning outcomes, and goals are defined and delivered prior to instruction for each module in a distance course. Graded discussion forums as well as quizzes, among other methods, are used for assessment and feedback; online submission of written work (with instructor feedback) and examinations are also means of course engagement, participation, and assessment.

Program Faculty

The faculty members of the history program are:

William Shea, Ph.D.	Professor
John Kyle Day, Ph.D	Associate Professor
Constanze Weise, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor
Clinton D. Young, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor
Walter Everett, M.A.	Instructor

The history program has one recent emeritus faculty member: Richard Corby, Ph.D., who retired in spring 2013. He specialized in African and world history.

The history program has one adjunct faculty member: Mary Helen Tillman, who teaches American history courses.

All faculty members are evaluated annually following the UAM faculty evaluation process for tenure and non-tenured faculty. This evaluation process includes classroom reviews by the dean and faculty peer(s), student evaluations, and self evaluations. The dean uses this information to formulate a review of each faculty member and discusses this review with the faculty member. This information is forwarded to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for review and comments.

Faculty members attend Professional Development Week prior to the start of each fall semester. This is an official orientation for all faculty members that update them on changes for

the new academic year. Faculty also has the opportunity to attend break-out sessions on academic advising, online classes, etc.

The course load for a full-time faculty member who holds the academic rank of Assistant Professor or higher is 12 semester credit hours per term. The course load for those holding the rank of instructor is 15 semester credit hours per term. Occasionally, there are opportunities for extra courses to be taught as an overload for additional pay. Summer teaching opportunities are available for courses that meet the minimum enrollment of 10 students.

The four faculty members ranked as assistant professor or above have averaged four courses (12 semester hours course load) each semester. The average course load for the instructor was 18 hours because he agreed to teach an overload in support of the UAM College of Technology at McGehee's general education courses.

Program Resources

Institutional support available for faculty development in teaching, research, and service include encouragement for faculty to develop special topic courses, financial incentives for the development of hybrid and online courses, technical support in instructional software, and access to "smart" classrooms in the MCB. Additionally, competitive faculty research grants are available to faculty through the university. These grants have been awarded every year to at least one of the history faculty. Finally, faculty members are encouraged to serve on university committees.

The history department has been very active in professional development activities. The self study report includes a table with 20 entries detailing professional development activities undertaken by the faculty over the past two years. These activities included presentation of

papers, moderating panel discussions, attending annual professional meetings, and accompanying students to regional meetings.

The Fred J. Taylor Library and Technology Center's collections comprise over 500,000 books, bound periodicals, microforms, government documents, and serial subscriptions. Many items are now available through on-line full text database resources (e.g., ScienceDirect, SpringerLink). The total budget for the entire School of Social and Behavioral Sciences is \$18,700 and is spent on books, e-books, journals, e-journals, and databases. Electronic databases are upgraded regularly, but the department cannot afford access to the JSTOR history and social sciences collections which "...eliminates the possibility of electronic access to the vast majority of scholarly journals in the field."

Campus resources for the department include "smart" rooms for instruction, a computer lab for students, a Writing Center for research paper writing, printed and electronic resources in the library, and consultations with reference librarians. The Best Chapter Award for Phi Alpha Theta provided a \$250 grant that the chapter used to purchase needed materials for the library. The history department hopes the initiative to integrate and share resources within University of Arkansas System will include access to electronic submissions and resources to help reduce the shortcomings of the department's lack of access to the JSTOR collections.

Over the last two years, the department has purchased a variety of office equipment and instructional materials. The following chart is a list of equipment purchases for the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences as a whole. All programs housed in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences use these items, including history. The history program does not have a separate budget for equipment purchases.

<i>Item Description</i>
Dell Optiplex 960 Desktop Computers (1 purchased for faculty office)
Dell 1440c Laser Printer
Dell Laptop Computer (2 for faculty use at conference presentations)
Fujitsu Scan Snap document scanner (Ix 500 for test scoring)
DVD on history of Arkansas Delta (Bayou Bartholomew)
Dell Optiplex 960 Desktop Computer (for classroom)
Remark Office OMR software for Survey scoring and analysis
Back-Ups 550VA Backup Power Up Supply (for faculty office)
SPSS statistical software
Dell 1210S Projector (2 for classroom)
Projector mount

Majors/Declared Students

The history program showed a 25percent increase in the number of majors from 2010 to 2011, and for the last two years these numbers were consistent. Recruitment seems to be based on university-level and program/student-level efforts.

<i>Declared History Majors</i>		
2010	2011	2012
32	40	42

Recruitment comes from traditional sources: high school recruitment days, freshman orientation, and Weevil Welcome days. The most successful tool for recruiting and retaining has been the Alpha Nu Zeta chapter of Phi Alpha Theta national History Honor Society. The chapter is quite active and allows faculty to recognize the most academically successful students, pursue research, service projects, and other extracurricular endeavors. Peer mentoring through the Office of Academic Advising is used to help retain students. Phi Alpha Theta offers programs to help students academically and socially.

The table below shows the number of graduates in history over the last three years:

<i>Year</i>	2010	2011	2012	Total	<i>Three Year Mean</i>
<i>Graduates</i>	13	7	4	24	8

Program Assessment

The history program of the UAM School of Social and Behavioral Sciences has enacted several methods of assessing the program, and there is evidence that attempts to improve the assessment process have been undertaken. The Major Fields Achievement Tests have been utilized as an assessment tool but have been determined to be an ineffective method for program assessment due to the small number of majors in history. A 'course-by-course' process appears to be the primary tool used for critique of student learning and the program. Student writing, research, presentation, and creative thinking skill development are tools used to assess the effectiveness of the program, although there did not appear to be any criteria established to critique overall student success in these attributes as they progress through the curriculum to graduation. The HIST 3513 Histiography and Historical Methods course was specifically mentioned as one measure of student achievement of the program learning goals. The database of various evaluations used in the HIST 3513 Histiography and Historical Methods course could be used for more quantitative analysis of program effectiveness. Student participation in professional meetings and entrance to graduate programs is also used by the faculty to for program assessment. The self study shows strength in the overall history program relative to student professional exposure; although no percentages of declared majors/minors participating in these activities was presented.

Overall, the assessment of the history program appears to be sufficient given the small number of majors/minors in the program. Attention to student achievement of learning and skill goals and individual course evaluation and assessment by faculty are emphasized as the primary means of program assessment. The curriculum was mentioned as a major mechanism used for student assessment and faculty has created a curriculum to develop the student learning

outcomes. A curriculum assessment plan needs to be enacted using scheduled intervals, such as every catalog year or every five years, in order to determine if new courses are needed, old courses should be dropped, or whether major revisions to existing courses are needed. Due to the small number of students in the program and the diversity of career opportunities of graduates, less emphasis on career placement assessment is used in the overall program review. However, the faculty are attempting to use post-graduate career evaluations as a tool as evidenced by their new strategy of obtaining email addresses of graduates for future surveys of career placement and satisfaction, and survey of employer information and evaluations, if applicable, and on a volunteer basis. This new strategy is commendable and should provide valuable information for future program assessment and improvement.

There is not a specific capstone course, instead, HIST 3513 Historiography and Historical Methods is used in lieu of a capstone course for history majors. This course is required of all majors and is taken once a student reaches junior standing and has completed all general education courses in history. Students are specifically taught the skills and cognitive approach necessary for critical thinking and problem solving. This is accomplished by introducing students to the nature of historical research and teaching them how to conceive, organize, and execute a historical research project. In order to complete the course satisfactorily, the student is required to demonstrate these skills by producing a research project identical to those found in capstone courses.

For the past two years at UAM, student evaluations of teaching have been administered through CoursEval, an online third party evaluation tool. Students answer seven questions and the faculty members have the ability to add up to three questions per specific course. Students

may add comments to some of the questions. Faculty members are able to view the student totals and comments after the semester has ended.

Given the number of graduates from the program, attempts at surveying students, employers and alumni have met with low return rates and a consequent inability to analyze the results quantitatively. As a result, Social and Behavioral Sciences is instituting an exit interview for graduates including those in history. This qualitative assessment information will be aggregated by year and then accumulated for subsequent years to allow for better assessment of student satisfaction.

History faculty is also evaluated through a series of peer evaluations that make up part of the annual faculty evaluation process. These evaluations consist of a classroom observation and written comments that are submitted to the Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences which are then made available to the faculty member for review. Peer reviews are valuable as they contain advice from experienced classroom teachers and do not suffer from the documented tendency of student evaluations to reflect the expected grade of the student reviewer.

Incoming transfer students are easily assimilated into the program if the student is transferring from another university in Arkansas, due partly to A.C.T.S. (Arkansas Common Course Transfer System) established by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Arkansas legislature. It is also partly an artifact of the nature of the history curricula at almost all institutions. The core courses are similar enough from one institution to another so that the transfer is simplified. And, all history curricula allow for a block of electives so that courses specific to one institution (e.g. special topics and seminars) can be accepted as electives at another.

History graduates over the past several years have followed all the major paths to post-baccalaureate engagement. Of those who did not proceed to graduate school for advanced degrees, students have been employed in each of the areas for which they are most prepared including government service and politics, non-governmental (especially charitable) organizations, private-sector positions requiring leadership and decision-making skills and military service. History graduates have also pursued successful careers in public service, private enterprise, investment banking, management, and public administration, with some even developing successful small businesses.

Exit surveys with job placement information are being developed by the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences which will provide more information in the future about graduate placement.

Program Effectiveness

Strengths of the Program

The faculty of the history program is its greatest strength. The instructors have been recruited from various geographical areas of the country. The student evaluations of the instructors have shown to be approximately 85 percent positive. Two of the faculty members have received the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences Trey Berry Outstanding Faculty Award. Another received an Outstanding Advisor Award from the Office of Academic Affairs in 2012 and 2013.

The Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society is highly active and is certainly a benefit to the history students. Phi Alpha Theta regularly undertakes service projects in the community, prepares students to present their research at academic conferences, and provides a social venue

for history students to interact. The UAM chapter has been awarded the Best Chapter Award for Division II for every year of its six years of existence.

Areas Most in Need of Improvement

The average starting annual salary for a UAM Assistant Professor of history is approximately \$12,000 below national average. Such salary inequity makes it difficult to recruit and retain quality faculty. The history program is also losing its senior faculty at the end of the spring 2014 semester.

The use of instructional technology could be improved. History is not very technology-dependent beyond the need for access to electronic journals and databases. The history program has proposed using digitally recorded lectures for future reference including possible publishing on YouTube.

Recruiting of new majors needs to be improved. Many of the students transfer into the history program after taking the general education courses (HIST 1013 Survey of Civilization I, HIST 1023 Survey of Civilization II, HIST 2213 American History I, and HIST 2223 American History II). Many are inspired by the enthusiasm of the history program faculty. Southeast Arkansas high schools do not have a History Day competition. These events, in which middle and high school students present historical projects in competition—much like a “historical” science fair—are an opportunity for potential students to meet faculty and learn about UAM. In the future the program may re-establish History Day in the Southeast Arkansas region.

Program Improvements over the Last Two Years

The history program hired a new faculty member for fall of 2013. During the summer of 2012, the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences upgraded MCB Room 318 to “smart room” status, adding to the ability of history faculty to use the latest technology in their teaching.

In the fall of 2013, the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences formed the Committee on Student Travel; the history program is represented by Dr. Young. This committee is developing guidelines to regulate travel study courses, facilitate student travel to academic conferences, and regularize funding for student conference travel. The guidelines drawn up by the committee are currently in operation in SSBS and may serve as a template for a University-wide policy.

Planned Program Improvements

The history program plans to continue applying for and receiving the faculty research grants. History faculty will also seek to fund the Phi Alpha Theta chapter by obtaining alumni donations or by administrative support.

One objective is to acquire additional hardware and software for recording lectures to be incorporated in online course offerings and hybrid courses. This should enhance distance learning.

Another improvement that is planned is to create a stable and predictable budget for supporting undergraduate student travel for presentation of scholarly research at conferences. The UAM administration has been very generous in the past with financial support of these students and their expenses for attending meetings and conferences. The Committee on Student Travel is establishing guidelines for this effort.

Two faculty members are currently consulting in restoration projects. In the future, the University hopes to involve students in the restoration process and the eventual operation of the properties as tourist destinations. This will provide hands-on learning for history majors and open new ideas for what students can do with a history degree.

Finally, history program faculty is discussing various ways to bring back History Day with Dr. Pat Ramsay, Statewide Coordinator of History Day. The history program is also working with Dr. Ramsay to explore the possibility of approaching the School of Education to discuss History Day with M.A.T. students, since History Day is also a part of the new Common Core educational requirements from the Arkansas Department of Education for all public school students in grades 1-12. This would assist the history program with its recruitment efforts since several M.A.T. students and graduates have a background either as a history major or minor in the M.A.T. program.

Institutional Program Review Committee

Greg Borse	School of Arts and Humanities
Paul Francis	School of Agriculture
Victoria Fox	School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences
Lynn Harris	School of Computer Information Systems
Kirk Kemp	UAM College of Technology at Crossett
Robert Kissell	School of Forest Resources
Jeff Longing	School of Education
Anita Shaw	School of Nursing
Becky Phillips, Chair	School of Business