

Interim Report for History Programme Review October 2013

The History Department has responded to the issues raised in the “Final Assessment Report: Undergraduate Program Review – History” prepared by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee in March 2012 and accepted by Senate in April 2012. The following Interim Report will speak directly to the opportunities for programme improvement and enhancement identified in the APPCom Report. Before addressing those issues, however, it should be noted that the History Programme continues to promote and develop the core strengths of the programme identified in the APPCom Report, including student-centred approaches to learning, intellectual rigour, the development of writing and oral competencies, and opportunities for faculty-student interaction.

The original recommendations for departmental action/implementation follow below, in order of priority. The descriptions of the departmental response to these appear below in **bold**.

APPCom Recommendations:

1. The introduction of a core Canadian survey course (2000-level) consistent with normative practices in undergraduate HIST programmes.

The department has implemented this change. Two Canadian History survey courses (HIST 2026 – Pre-Confederation and HIST 2027 – Post-Confederation) have been added and made required for all of the degree programmes in History.

2. The introduction of elective courses of broad student interest – appealing to majors and non-majors – including those in film history, women’s history, military history and public history.

The department has two courses on Film & History now among its offerings. Though popular (with enrolments of 40+ and 60+) each of these has only been offered once due to constraints caused by faculty course releases, sabbatical leave, and a current vacancy in the usual faculty complement). HIST 2907: Film and Modern History is scheduled to be offered in the 2015W term, with hopes that a replacement faculty appointment will be able to teach it.

The department has three women’s history courses now (HIST 2216 – History of Women & the Family in the Pre-Industrial Era; HIST 2217 – History of Women & the Women’s Movement in the Modern Era; HIST 3306 – History of Women in Canada). HIST 2216 and 2217 were offered in 2012-13, and HIST 3306 will be offered in 2014F.

The department has developed two new courses in Military History. HIST 3406: Topics in Canadian Military history was offered in 2012 F, and HIST 3407: Topics in Military History is being offered in 2013F.

The department discussed the development of several courses in Public History with the university President in the winter of 2013. It was agreed that the department would develop two courses in this area after the return of Dr Rutherford from his sabbatical. The department’s intent is to carry out this development, but it is also dependent on the staffing situation in the department, with the need to have its full complement of three

tenured/tenure-track faculty in order to allow the rostering of these two new courses.

3. The introduction of thesis and non-thesis options for students with varied academic or career plans, with both options maintaining the strong intellectual rigour of the programme.

The department has introduced four-year Bachelor of Arts (non-Honours) option. The non-Honours programme requires students to complete 54 credits in HIST, only six credits less than the Honours requirement (due to the removal of the HIST 4055 [Honours Thesis] requirement), thus maintaining the rigour of the programme.

4. The revision of course numbering practices to align with standard University practices, wherein the number assigned to a course assists in identifying the student population for which the course is intended and reflects the sequential development of knowledge in a given area.

The department has begun to implement this proposal. 2000-series courses are intended to be broader surveys, 3000-series more specialized in their focus, and 4000-series courses are seminars for senior students in the programme.

The two American History survey courses (HIST 2806 – History of the United States: Origins to the Civil War, and HIST 2807 – History of the United States: Civil War to the Present) have been moved from the 3000-series (formerly 3506 and 3507). The two Canadian History surveys mentioned above were moved from the 1000-series. The two more specialized Canadian Social History courses (3596: Before World War I, and 3597: Twentieth Century) were moved from the 2000-series (formerly 2596 and 2597).

The department will continue to consider the placement of its existing and new courses based on this policy.

5. The deletion of dormant HIST courses to improve student expectations of regular offerings and faculty plans for rolling course rosters.

The department undertook some purging of dormant courses in the 2013-13 academic year. Any further removal of courses should wait until the filling of the vacant tenure-track position, as this position is recommended to be in First Nations – Newcomer relations, and many of the existing dormant courses are in that area of specialization. The planning of a dependable rolling roster will depend on the stabilization of departmental staffing, as well as the return of faculty from successive sabbaticals in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

6. The provision of the three-year rolling rosters to students and advisors in order to assist with programme planning.

See above response to #5.