

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC
MEMORANDUM**

To: Senate
From: J.M. Munro, Vice-President, Academic
Subject: External Review - Department of History
Date: December 14, 1994

The Department of History was subject to an External Review in 1994. The site visit took place in March 1994 and the response to the review was received by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning at its meeting on November 9, 1994.

The External Review Committee had the following membership:-

Professor Alan Cassels
Department of History, McMaster University

Professor Kathleen E. McCone
Dean of Social Science and Professor of History, University of Windsor

Professor H.V. Nelles
Department of History, York University

Professor Peter Kennedy
Department of Economics, Simon Fraser University.

Attached is the response from the Department, incorporating the recommendations of the External Review Committee. These are forwarded to Senate for information and copies of the full report of the External Review Committee are available for Senators from Secretariat Services.



Enclosure: 1

senate/pjs

RESPONSE OF THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT
TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW
SEPTEMBER 1994

The History Department was particularly pleased to learn that the external reviewers were struck by the Department's "elevated degree of citizenship within the university community" and by our achievement of "an enviable reputation in the field of History for the university in Canada and abroad." We were also pleased to read that they believe "the Department has earned its reputation as one of the strongest units within Simon Fraser University."

In what follows we try to address the reviewers' specific suggestions about ways in which to improve an already excellent Department.

Recommendation 1:

the department encourage the development of comparative and thematic courses linking its three geographical areas

Courses already exist within our curriculum that cut across regions and periods (see HIST 104, 251, 300, 312, 326, 354, 410, 481, 484, 495), but we could certainly do more to develop thematic courses that would link the three streams within the present curriculum.

This is a matter that has now been referred to the Department's Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Recommendation 2:

the Public History diploma be eliminated if permanent faculty cannot be found to teach the courses

The Public History Diploma has been successful in attracting students who seek certification in Public History and it has

performed a valuable service to the university community over the last decade. Indeed in many places, particularly in the United States, Public History is a a popular and growing field. It would be a shame for Simon Fraser to lose its toehold in this area, especially since Public History allows us to serve the wider community and to promote local interest in history.

The external reviewers were right, however, to observe the marginal nature of the Public History program within the Department. With no specialist on staff, the Department has been forced to hire sessional instructors and Public History students have not been properly integrated into the Department or its main academic program. An appointment in the field would certainly solve the problem, but failing that the Department is at present contemplating the dissolution of the Public History program. We would probably seek to retain HIST 302: Archives Methods and Use, but eliminate HIST 301: Heritage Preservation and HIST 303: Museums Methods and Use from our curriculum.

Recommendation 3:

a variety of formats be tried in addition to the single open-enrolment 300 level course to facilitate access to undergraduate courses at the upper level

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Recommendation 4:

undergraduate scheduling be reviewed with the purpose of expanding student access to required and cognate courses

The Department has always attempted to achieve optimal scheduling, but also recognizes the constraints built into the university's system of scheduling courses: that the registrar's office has only so much space to allocate and that students are reluctant to take courses early in the morning or on Friday afternoons.

Nevertheless, in 94.3 the Department may have achieved a more balanced schedule of rational and complementary offerings than in previous semesters, and we shall continue to explore ways in which the best scheduling of courses may be achieved.

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reading requirements in some 400 level seminars be reduced

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A long and thoughtful debate within the Department in the wake of the review led us this spring to propose to the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee and hence to Senate a package of reforms that would see the History Department increase the credit in all its upper-level courses from three to four. In these courses we shall not increase present reading loads, thus striking a fairer balance between credits and work for our students without compromising the integrity of our courses. The students consulted seem pleased with the reform.

Recommendation 6:
the honors program be dropped

History's Honors Program was reformed and restructured only a year ago. Some problems emerged in the first year, but we believe that these will be corrected with a package of revisions recently sent to the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee and to Senate. It may have been these problems that concerned the external reviewers, but it is also clear that they believed that our regular program is demanding enough.

Still, it would seem premature to drop the Honors Program. In view of the forthcoming fine-tuning of the Program and the recommendation by the reviewers, no applications for entrance into our formal Honors Program will be accepted in 1994-95. We propose, however, to offer the revised Honors Program beginning in September 1995 and to review its success two years later. If at that time, it has failed to match departmental expectations we would be prepared to take up the recommendation of the reviewers.

Recommendation 7:
TA preparation and supervision be made a departmental priority

In fact, the Department has always laid great stress upon the full preparation of TAs. Not only do we urge them to participate in the TA day offered by the University's Centre for Teaching, but we attempt to build into all courses that employ TAs regular preparation for handling tutorial groups. In these sessions, we recommend strategies for engaging students in the close analysis of material, how to deal with difficult students, and how to heighten student interest in topics.

We shall, of course, continue these practices, but our Chair of Graduate Studies has also begun a reference library on university teaching specifically for the use of TAs.

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to MA students be reviewed*

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Recommendation 9:

*the "fit" between incoming student needs and
graduate course availability be carefully considered*

The point is a valid one, though in a small graduate program not always easy to achieve. In-coming graduate students arrive with a wide range of interests, but the study of history, if it is to be meaningful, must be grounded in specific case studies which will not appeal to every student.

Nevertheless, the Department is committed to mounting graduate seminars in Canadian and European history that both satisfy students needs and extend their knowledge and professional training.

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This is a vexed question within the Department, in part because undergraduate enrolment pressures have been such that the Department has been unable to release those with supervisory duties from undergraduate teaching. The external reviewers were obviously as frustrated as the Department in finding a solution to the problem. The administration has informed the Department that no solution from above may be expected in the near future.

Recommendation 12:

*efforts to improve the intellectual environment
of the department linking students and faculty be continued*

Again this is a reference to the relations of graduate students and faculty and to a seminar series conducted last year. Not only shall we continue that series this year, but we now have access to AQ 6229, a large corner room in the AQ, which should provide a much better and nearer setting for the seminar series. The Department has also made a major commitment to establish a graduate student common room at one end of the Department (AQ 6216A). The Department also encourages graduate students to participate in the Qualicum history conference which we mount with the province's other universities. We give small grants to graduate students to make their attendance possible. All of this should help us to continue to enhance the intellectual atmosphere of the Department for faculty and graduate students and to provide better facilities for our graduate program.

Recommendation 13:

*a departmental committee develop a comprehensive plan
for retirement replacements arising within the next decade*

Indeed this was a recommendation made by the Department itself and is to be found in its Internal Report. We differ in only one respect with the external reviewers who thought that

this plan should probably not be constructed by the Department's Appointments Committee, but by the Department as a whole. The plan will be discussed by the Department as a whole and be voted upon before it is sent to the Dean of Arts, but it would seem necessary for the duly elected Appointments Committee to construct the plan. This charge has been given to the Appointments Committee and we would hope that by April 1995 we would be in a position to send a package of recommendations to the Dean.

Recommendation 14:

the department should expect that between 40-50% of the new appointments be of women in view of the characteristics of the pool of graduate candidates

We so expect, though, committed as we are to the University's Employment Equity Policy, we would not want to be constrained to hiring a mere 40-50% from among the designated groups if excellent candidates are available. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the History Department's recent record in this matter speaks for itself. Since 1991, we have hired four female and four and a half male historians.

Recommendation 15:

East Asian and Women's History should be hiring priorities

We concur with this recommendation and are pleased to note that, in recognition of this external review recommendation and of the University's needs in the field, the Dean of Arts, Dr. Evan Alderson, has authorized the Department to make an appointment in East Asian history.

The need to replace Prof. Strong-Boag, who departed for UBC in 1991, is, however, outstanding. Canadian women's history remains a huge and embarrassing gap in the University's curriculum.

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the balance struck between teaching and research be maintained

It is our intention.

Recommendation 17:
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The Department believes that the new Can-Copy arrangement should satisfy this recommendation.

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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
MEMORANDUM

TO: J.M. Munro
Vice-President, Academic

FROM: Paul Dutton
Chair, History



RE: Response to the External Review

DATE: 22.9.94

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The History Department was pleased to receive the report its external reviewers: Prof. Alan Cassels of McMaster; Prof. Kathleen E. McCrone of Windsor; and Prof. H.V. Nelles of York. Copies of the report were supplied to the entire Department. The Department's own external review committee (W. Cleveland, D. Cole, P. Dutton, and E. Ingram) discussed the report in detail with Evan Alderson, Dean of Arts, and Bruce Clayman, Dean of Graduate Studies. The report and the Department's responses to the individual recommendations made in it were discussed by the Department as whole at its meeting of 22 September 1994. What follows are our responses and plans to implement some of those recommendations.



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Review of the Department of History

Simon Fraser University

1994

External Reviewers:

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Department of History, McMaster University

Professor Kathleen E. McCrone,

Dean of Social Science and Professor of History, University of Windsor

Professor H.V. Nelles,

Department of History, York University

Internal Reviewer:

Professor Peter Kennedy,

Department of Economics, Simon Fraser University

Summary of Recommendations

In the following pages the History Department Review Committee recommends that:

- the department encourage the development of comparative and thematic courses linking its three geographical areas,
- the Public History diploma be eliminated if permanent faculty cannot be found to teach the courses,
- a variety of formats be tried in addition to the single open-enrolment 300 level course to facilitate access to undergraduate courses at the upper level,
- undergraduate scheduling be reviewed with the purpose of expanding student access to required and cognate courses,
- reading requirements in some 400 level seminars be reduced,
- the honours programme be dropped,
- TA preparation and supervision be made a departmental priority,
- the policy of entrusting TA-ships primarily to MA students be reviewed,
- the "fit" between incoming student needs and graduate course availability be carefully considered,
- the departmental statement regarding reading courses be reviewed,
- a policy regarding credit for graduate supervision be seriously considered at the university level,
- efforts to improve the intellectual environment of the department linking students and faculty be continued,
- a departmental committee develop a comprehensive plan for retirement replacements arising within the next decade,
- the department should expect that between 40-50% of the new appointments be of women in view of the characteristics of the pool of graduate candidates,
- East Asian and Women's History should be hiring priorities,
- the balance struck between teaching and research be maintained,

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Report of the Review Committee

Introduction

For three days early in March 1994 the History Department Review Committee conducted an extensive dialogue with students, faculty and staff of the department as well as members of the university administration. The Self-Study document prepared by the department - to which undergraduate and graduate students made a significant contribution as well - provided the Review Committee with a comprehensive overview of the history of the department, its programmes, professional accomplishments and policies.

During the course of our three days of interviews our admiration for the department grew as we came to understand better its challenges and achievements. We were struck again and again with the high level of commitment and professionalism exhibited. Members of the department are conscientious about both their teaching and research. They demonstrate an elevated degree of citizenship within the university community, and they have made an enviable

reputation in the field of History for the university in Canada and abroad. We are pleased to confirm that in our opinion the department has earned its reputation as one of the strongest units within Simon Fraser University.

Our Report takes the form of a commentary loosely organized within the framework set forth by our Terms of Reference. In the interests of brevity we have tried to focus our comments on the major areas of departmental responsibility and the issues that came to our attention during our interviews.

Undergraduate Programme

The History Department Review Committee's Term of Reference with regard to the Undergraduate Programme is to examine and report and comment on existing conditions and opportunities for improvement with regard to its "strengths and weakness...in terms of structure, breadth, orientation and other factors."

The information provided to the Committee prior to and during its visit made it clear that the needs of the Undergraduate Programme drive the department. Given the large undergraduate and relatively small graduate enrolment, this is to be expected, justifiable and likely to continue.

The Committee is impressed by the faculty's and administration's strong commitment to the programme, and to excellence in teaching, the tutorial and seminar method of instruction, and rigorous academic standards. Further, it is impressed by the generally high level of student satisfaction and graduates' later academic and professional success.

As with any programme, however, there are several aspects that warrant attention:

1. Curriculum

The tripartite division, that has been a distinctive feature of the curriculum since the department's foundation, remains valid. In future, however, the boundaries between the areas should be diminished and linkages established. As the nature of historical studies changes in the direction of less geographic and periodic specificity, thematic, comparative and cross-disciplinary approaches should be encouraged between (and within) the areas, as should non-Eurocentric foci and interpretations. The Committee notes with approval that junior faculty have already begun to explore such possibilities, and recommends that they and their senior colleagues be encouraged in this.

With regard to breadth, the Review Committee identifies two significant gaps -- East Asian and Women's History. Given demand and need, the Committee advises the department to make appointments in both areas as soon as resources and opportunities permit. While East Asia would be an important new area for the department, it has long had national distinction in Women's History. Veronica Strong-Boag's departure and non-replacement have seriously jeopardized this. If arrangements cannot be made with Women's Studies for a joint appointment of the Strong-Boag ilk, a full-time appointment in Women's History is recommended strongly. The Committee notes that Joy Parr is neither Strong-Boag's replacement nor, by her own declaration, is she a women's historian.

As for Public History, if there is no prospect of making a faculty appointment in this area in the very near future, the Committee recommends dropping the certificate programme, since without permanent faculty support it is obviously "orphaned." Individual courses in Public History should be retained in the curriculum, however.

2. Access

In written and oral presentations to the Committee students and faculty alike identified a serious problem of access to third and fourth level courses. It would appear that students are frequently unable to register in required courses and in areas of interest, with the result that they have to resort to the undesirable expedient of taking distance education courses, and all too often of having to delay graduation.

The Review Committee supports the determination of students and faculty to preserve as much as possible of the tutorial and seminar method of instruction, and notes with approval the department's creation of an open enrolment third year course as a first step towards addressing the access problem. The Committee recommends that the department pay close attention to the effects of the new course, and anticipates that it will soon have to consider whether or not to offer more such courses and the number it will allow students to take. In the Committee's judgement an appropriate resolution of the access-tutorial/seminar problem may well be to offer a mix of upper-level courses of various sorts, ie: large enrolment lecture courses, medium enrolment lecture/tutorial courses, small enrolment seminars. Given that the History Department is likely to have to service even more students in the very near future, with the same or fewer resources, consideration of this seems particularly advisable.

In discussing the access problem with the Review Committee a number of students expressed concern that courses likely to attract the same sorts of students were often scheduled at the same time. The Committee recommends that the department analyze further the relationship between access problems and scheduling, and if such is found to be significant, to take remedial action.

3. Course Workload

The Committee feels that in some courses at all levels beyond the first, and particularly in some 400 level courses in the European and Third World areas, the quantity of required reading is excessive. On the other hand, writing requirements seem appropriate.

The department should examine course workloads in terms of the short duration of all semester courses, the normal workload of students, and students preparedness, in an effort to identify a reasonable norm at each level. Students' workloads inevitably will have to be considered in the light of the new open enrolment 300 level course, which may have the effect of reducing overall reading requirements.

4. Credit/Contact Hours

The Committee believes that credit and contact hours should remain at three in 400 level courses, at least until the impact can be evaluated of the open enrolment course(s) and a reduced workload in those courses where problems have been identified.

5. Honours Programme

Notwithstanding the commendable recent efforts to revise and define the Honours programme, and its negligible call on resources, the Review Committee considers such a programme unnecessary and recommends that it be dropped.

The regular four-year programme is demanding and of high quality. That it prepares students extremely well for post-graduate study is evidenced by their regular admission to and

success in very good graduate programmes. As it is students in the regular programme have considerable difficulty completing their studies in four years. The Honours Programme, in demanding even more time from good students, serves to delay further their progress towards graduation and graduate studies, to no apparent justifiable end. If the honours programme is abolished the Committee recommends retention in the curriculum of the fourth year honours seminar as a regular seminar course.

6. Quality of Instruction

The Committee judges this to be excellent, and commends the department for its members' high level of concern about undergraduate teaching and the quality and nature of instruction in the curriculum. The undergraduate students with whom the Committee met had high praise for the quality of classroom teaching and the amount and quality of assistance outside of class provided by regular faculty. They expressed considerable concern, however, about the uneven quality of teaching assistants in tutorials; and teaching assistants themselves expressed concern about being "thrown into" tutorials with little or no training or instruction and about the limited contact they had with some course instructors.

The Committee recognizes that this is a problem in universities across the continent and can offer few suggestions other than that the department should perhaps do more "in house" to orient/instruct teaching assistants prior to the beginning of terms and to ensure that course instructors collaborate more closely with TAs. The graduate students gave the Review Committee to understand that in some cases TAs are responsible for the entire and/or final course grade. This concerns the Committee and it strongly recommends that the assignment of

final grades be the responsibility of instructors.

7. Conclusion

The Review Committee judges the overall quality of the undergraduate programme to be very good. The faculty's commitment to, and students' satisfaction with, the programme are strikingly high, as are its academic standards. The Committee is confident that the current level of quality can be maintained and even improved, given continuing excellence in hiring and adjustments to curriculum and pedagogy necessitated by changes in the nature of historical studies, in teaching techniques, in the background and nature of the student body, in enrolment patterns and in fiscal realities.

Graduate Programme

Introduction

In accord with the Review Committee's terms of reference, the following commentary addresses not just the general quality of graduate programmes, but specifically (a) the adequacy of support and (b) the rate of student progress through the programmes. On the latter score, before arriving at Simon Fraser University, the Committee received statistics indicating above-average degree completion times and drop-out rates. We later learned of the Graduate Dean's concern that many withdrawals come late in students' programmes. The issues of time-to-completion and withdrawal rates are treated in several of the subsections below.

1. Enrolment

Graduate programmes in the History Department are not large in enrollment but, as is invariably the case, they are important in contributing to the department's intellectual vitality. Currently, 33 students are enrolled in the masters programme and 8 in the doctoral programme. While the MA complement is roughly equivalent to that in comparable departments, the PhD figure is much smaller.

The Review Committee regards the present enrolment figures as satisfactory. Anything less would adversely affect the department's intellectual climate. But to expand might be deleterious in other respects. Apart from the financial restraints on graduate growth, the department is heavily and commendably committed to quality undergraduate teaching, and faces increased pressure in this area from prospective increased enrollment. Augmentation of the graduate programme carries the danger of compromising the present high calibre of undergraduate education.

2. Resources - Funding: Recruitment and In-Programme

The department's Internal Report laments the lack of graduate scholarships in history to attract first-rate students. On the other hand, the department has fared well recently in competition for university-wide graduate entrance awards. It may be that it has required 25 years for Simon Fraser University's graduate history programmes to establish the sort of reputation which attracts first-class applicants. If indeed the department is now beginning to appeal to the kind of candidate it wants, this will help to expunge its past record of slow degree completions and withdrawals.

The great majority of Simon Fraser's history graduate students receive financial help. Although for reasons of time the Review Committee were unable to investigate individual cases, we believe that the graduate student body is on the whole adequately funded. The main form of university graduate fellowship pays an MA student \$4,100 per semester, a PhD student \$4,700. We would term these awards generous compared with similar fellowships in other Canadian universities. However, most history graduate student funding comes from teaching assistantships. Again, at over \$4,000 per semester at the master's level and over \$5,000 at the doctoral level, these are generous sums. But we should point out that the hours of work required (210 per semester) are very high on the comparable Canadian scale. Unless a student is prepared to forego a TA-ship occasionally, the workload must inhibit the swift completion of degree requirements. Since in the History Department most TA-ships are held by master's candidates, this applies particularly to the MA programme discussed below. (We recognize that the terms of a TA-ship contract are beyond the department's competence and therefore this Committee's terms of reference. Similarly, the department's advocacy of a university-wide standard for TA compensation falls outside our remit.)

The distribution of TA-ships between PhD and MA candidates calls for comment. Doctoral candidates, we were informed, do not normally serve as TAs. Our experience of Ontario universities is that full-time doctoral students almost invariably hold TA-ships, which are more often withheld at the MA level. Simon Fraser University History Department's reversal of the Ontario pattern has pros and cons. On the one hand it facilitates rapid progress to degree completion. On the other hand it deprives PhD students of recent teaching experience when they come to apply for a first academic position. Furthermore, one cannot but wonder at the impact on

the undergraduate programme if TAs are drawn largely from those graduate students with minimal experience. On balance, the Review Committee believes the department might do well to reappraise its present TA policy.

3. MA Programme

In order to speed up progress through the MA programme, the department in 1992 introduced two optional paths to the degree. It retained the thesis option - in theory a 4 or 5 semester programme though statistics argue a longer time in practice. Freshly created was a "project option" with a greater course/seminar content to be completed ideally in a year of full-time study. It is expected that the latter will become the normal road to an MA history degree, and is especially recommended to students intending to move on to doctoral work. The Review Committee gathered many views from both faculty and graduate students on the new MA option.

We applaud the department's attempt to restructure its programme in the direction of conciseness. Moreover, we wholeheartedly commend the intellectual coherence of the project-option MA. We do not consider it in any way academically inferior to the MA thesis option. Such concerns as follow are related to start-up problems, and do not detract from our approval in principle.

There are built-in restrictions to the programme. An obligatory (and valuable) seminar in research methodology is required of all candidates. Of the three remaining seminars in the project option programme, two are predetermined for most students; whether students find themselves working in an area of preferred specialization is a matter of chance. This is unavoidable in a one-year programme, given the faculty resources available. Moreover, at the

MA level study in too narrow an area is not pedagogically sound, and the students in question still specialize by field (Canadian, European or other). Nevertheless, we would urge the department in selecting which seminars to mount to examine the specialties and strengths of the entering master's cohort. And above all, to provide diversity between the two seminars in the very broad European field. Some faculty, we learned, have sought imaginatively to accommodate non-specialists in their MA seminars, eg. by dwelling more on historiography than content. This sensitivity deserves encouragement. Finally, many students hope to substitute a reading course for a third seminar in a non-preferred area, but find this difficult to accomplish. We understand the constraints imposed on an overburdened faculty to supply an indefinite number of reading courses, but we also note that the graduate brochure sent to incoming students implies that reading courses listed are automatically available. Some change of either phraseology or practice seems in order.

4. PhD Programme

We have no serious reservations about the modest doctoral programme. Normally, comprehensive exams are taken within a year of entering the programme - a gratifyingly swift timetable though perhaps accomplished at some cost (see above regarding TA-ships). The form of the exam itself is orthodox, and the mix of written and oral testing satisfactory. Many doctoral candidates are prone to demand the maximum of thesis supervision which, if given, can be stultifying. Our impression is that PhD supervisors in the History Department preserve a healthy balance between the hands-on and hands-off approach, between necessary friendliness and formality.

The average age of history doctoral students is relatively high. This we take as evidence of the department's commitment to the principle of continuous lifetime learning. Of course, accepting candidates who may have been out of academe for some time involves the risk of escalating the drop-out rate, but it is one we think worth taking.

5. Credit for Graduate Supervision

There is no more vexing issue than that of providing faculty with appropriate credit for graduate supervision, especially thesis direction. The department's internal report describes an ingenious scheme already in place, but also confesses that other departmental requirements render unworkable. The restructured MA programme discussed above will reduce the amount of thesis supervision at that level. But this leaves unresolved the doctoral programme where most work is conducted in Canadian and European history.

The intractability of the problem, however, should not discourage efforts to find a solution. Any department which places too heavy a burden of graduate supervision on the shoulders of faculty with prospects of mobility - and this means productive scholars who attract the best graduate students - runs the risk of losing some of its most valued members. This should be of concern to the university administration at large. The Review Committee was pleased to learn that a Simon Fraser University Senate Committee has the matter under review.

6. General

The Review Committee had a lively meeting with some twenty graduate students. The general tenor was positive towards the department, though frequent reference was made to the

absence of "intellectual discourse." This appeared to mean the opportunity for history shop-talk outside of a formal course or supervisory environment. (Parenthetically, the younger faculty members made the same sort of comment.) We do not ascribe this to any shortcoming of the department, but rather to the circumstances of a commuter university and the time pressures attendant on a trimester system. However, we do urge the department to maintain its efforts to nurture an atmosphere of intellectual interchange. The acquisition of a graduate lounge in the summer of 1994 will be an enormous benefit. Additionally, the recently inaugurated series of faculty-graduate colloquia should be persevered with, despite its teething troubles. Continued encouragement of graduate participation, not just as audience, but as speakers and panel members, will be well advised.

7. Conclusion

Overall, our judgement of graduate work in history is favourable. Graduate programmes are soundly conceived, effectively managed and taught by faculty members with high scholarly credentials. Academic standards are demanding, but reasonably so. Finances and library resources necessitate keeping the programmes within bounds, but they are clearly sustainable. The problems of lengthy time-to-degree and withdrawal rates we believe to have been due in part to circumstances over which the department has had little control. And insofar as it lay within the department's competence to address these issues, they have done so with good sense, notably by the introduction of a new MA programme. Simon Fraser University's history graduate programmes have matured, and their future looks bright.

Faculty Complement

1. Retirements

In the view of the Review Committee, the History Department has not given enough attention to its future. Within a very few years the department will lose many members to retirement, and surprisingly little thought has been given to the implications.

Because many retirements are looming, the Review Committee expected to find a department vigorously debating its future possibilities. Perhaps in deference to the feelings of soon to be departing members, or perhaps because everyone is too preoccupied with an overload of present responsibilities, the department does not seem to have come squarely to terms with the challenge and opportunity retirements bring. It is also clearly the case that university-wide budget exercises have had the unintended effect of convincing the department that retirement replacements would not be forthcoming. The Review Committee is assured by members of the administration that the recent budget modelling exercise was not intended to foreclose discussion of retirement planning. The History Department should most certainly conduct its own planning activities under the assumption that all or a large proportion of its retirement openings will be filled. It should also take measures to ensure that retirement does not automatically engage processes of replication.

2. Planning for Renewal

The Review Committee believes that the challenge of retirement is an opportunity of

such sweeping implications that the department needs some means of rethinking itself in a comprehensive way. In effect the Department will be renewing itself completely over the next decade. A conventional process such as would be carried out by the Appointments Committee on a case by case basis would unduly narrow the range of options. In any institution the instinct of replication is always powerful. The department collectively should make choices as to those instances direct replacement in the same field is necessary, and when the occasion should be seized to move in new intellectual directions. An appointments procedure should be adopted to take into account the whole range of upcoming retirements to plan the make-up of the new department that will emerge over the next decade.

3. Renewal and Gender Balance

As the department renews itself it is to be expected that its character will change. At present it is overwhelmingly male. The graduate pool from which new appointments will be drawn has a quite different gender make-up. Two of five recent junior appointments have been women. The Review Committee expects that female historians will comprise 40 - 50% of retirement replacement appointments, a ratio that would reflect the new character of the historical profession at the graduate level.

Research Contributions of Faculty

1. Reputation

The Department of History at Simon Fraser University is recognized nationally for the

quality of its scholars. This is immediately obvious to a Review Committee drawn in large measure from outside the university. It is a pleasure to discover that within the university the department is considered one of the stronger academic units, that its accomplishments are appreciated, and that its scholarly influence extends beyond its walls.

Members of the Review Committee did not have to consult cv's to recognize the scholarly achievements of several members of the department. In both the North American and the European areas the department contains several scholars with national and international reputations. Scholars in the Third World group are not as well known, but they too have some significant publications to their credit. In all areas, but particularly in the North American and European groups, the department has outstanding academic strength.

2. The Tone of the Department

Clearly the senior, well-established members of the department set a scholarly "tone" that expects research and publication to be an integral part of academic life. This was apparent to us on many occasions, but most obviously during a lively session with five of the most recent junior appointments. They expect to be able to continue their already well-advanced research careers and consider publication a necessary condition of continuing appointment.

What we have found is that on balance the department has a solid scholarly reputation. That is to say, the department is home to several prolific scholars in key areas. It has some real "stars" who bring distinction to the department. These professors can be counted among the leading practitioners in their field in the country. The International History Review also adds lustre to the department. At the same time the department has a solid cadre of "academic

citizens" at its core who have made, and continue to make, regular and valued contributions to the historical literature. Over the years the department has lost several outstanding scholars, notably in the North American area, but it has also been able to recruit exceptional talent and nurture development of its existing members. In the cycle of renewal the department would appear to be gaining scholarly standing.

A commitment to teaching and research on the part of each faculty member is the ideal. That for quite understandable reasons is not always possible. Taken together the differential commitments to teaching and research add up to a departmental style. Clearly some scholars' research careers have taken off at Simon Fraser. Just as obviously some members of the department have opted out of scholarship leading to publication and have defined themselves primarily as teachers. This was permissible in the past; it is less likely to be the case in the future.

It seems to us, therefore, that a new balance is likely to be struck in the department over the next generation, one in which all members of the department will be expected to maintain an active research programme. Publication expectations within the department are rising as are standards for promotion and tenure. At the same time it is unlikely that the pendulum will swing too far in that direction or that publication will be consciously pursued by the department at the expense of good teaching. There is a "just mean," and in different ways at different times the department seems to have found it.

3. Workload

In the experience of the Review Committee the teaching workload of faculty members

and the support available from the department and university ought to allow good teaching and active research to co-exist and support one another. The claim cannot be made that in comparative terms the teaching workload stands in the way of research and publication. The university has programmes already in place to assist junior faculty to get under way with their research activities. Indeed, junior faculty are grateful both for the support and for the proactive steps the administration has taken to assist them. Some members of the department have had considerable success in obtaining research grants from the SSHRCC and other outside agencies. Their experience should provide some mentoring for incoming faculty as well as an honourable reputation to maintain.

Size of the Administrative and Support Staff

1. Personnel

The Review Committee is grateful for the opportunity to talk to the dedicated staff who support the academic efforts of the department. We met a team of committed professionals ably headed by the Departmental Assistant, Ms. Joanna Koczowski. The complement also appears to be large enough to meet the Departments needs.

Competent, professional leadership is one of the keys to effective teamwork. Joanna Koczowski is held in the highest regard by faculty, students and fellow staff members. In the swirl of the semester system and as faculty come and go, she provides a steady "anchor" to the department. Business gets done quietly and effectively.

2. Responsibilities

The Undergraduate and Graduate Secretaries, the Programme Assistant and the Clerical Staff have clearly defined responsibilities, work well together, and get along well with faculty and students. We got the impression from everyone we talked to, including the support staff themselves, of an experienced, smoothly functioning team with high standards of service. Workloads peak at different times for the various members of the team, but they regularly pitch in to help each other. This willingness to work together to help meet collective responsibilities is especially to be commended.

At Simon Fraser University with its semester system support staff have the responsibility for advising students. The requirements of various degrees would seem to be clearly spelled out and thus this academic task can be delegated. Graduate and undergraduate students were solid in their appreciation for the conscientious efforts of the advising staff. Clearly at Simon Fraser University support staff play a larger role in the lives of students than at other universities. Support staff serve not only as the contact points between the administration and the student, but also as guides, counsellors, and to a certain extent as advocates for the students. There is much to be said for such a system. Everything we observed, heard, and read led us to believe that the department was more than adequately "supported" by a staff whose functions transcend those normally associated with support positions.

Adequacy of Teaching Resources, Including Library

A history department must have good working relations with the library, access

provisions to make scarce materials available to students, and a library acquisitions budget capable of supporting its new and ongoing programmes. In all three realms the Review Committee believes there is some room for improvement.

1. Collection Development

Not surprisingly the historians at Simon Fraser University believe their library to be inadequate to their teaching needs. Perhaps more surprisingly the department harbours some lingering resentments against the library as a result of recent conflict. If the department ever hopes to receive support from the library for improvements, it will have to make a concerted effort to improve its working relationship with the library.

The Review Committee members took some time to examine the Library collection first hand. After an hour or so of cruising the stacks and tapping away at terminals each member came away thinking that in general the library collection seemed adequate for undergraduate requirements and graduate work at the MA level in the areas the department has chosen to emphasize. It is not a research library and could not sustain an expanded PhD programme. But the present collection supplemented by an active interlibrary loan programme serves the basic needs of undergraduate and MA level work. The library did not have several new journals in the field of Women's History, but in most respects the collection measured up to the simple tests we conducted. It could, of course, be better. And if the department hopes to open up new fields some resources will have to be committed to collection development.

When the Review Committee received information about the allocation of funding for collections development between programmes it seemed on the face of it as if History has not

received an equitable share of resources. There are no doubt historical reasons for the perceived discrepancies, and it is extremely difficult to adjust allocations between departments once "entitlements" have been informally established by long practice. Nor does the Review Committee have an easy answer to the question of how resources ought to be divided between departments. However some less "library dependant" units than History get considerably more books and journals; on a per student basis the comparative history library allocation would also seem to be light. But we recognize that these are crude indicators. Much more thought needs to be directed towards this contentious issue of dividing scarce library resources in the most productive and efficient manner. It is our understanding that the Senate Library Committee has this matter under consideration. We would only underline that by comparison with some related units in the social sciences and the humanities the History library acquisition budget seems low.

2. Library Policy

Library policies impinge upon the department as well in ways it believes interferes with effective teaching. A Reserve Policy that limits the number of titles to 20 per course might be too restrictive. On the other hand, inspection of the Reserve shelves did not suggest that historians were the heaviest users of the service. We are mindful, as well, of the cautioning words we heard from the library about the degree to which students actually use the materials placed on reserve. The department must base its expectations upon a clearer understanding of how students use the library.

3. Relations between the Department and the Library

A small acquisition budget and an overly restrictive reserve policy are not the most contentious issues however, between the department and the library. The way in which the library implemented a recent Senate ruling on new course proposals raised the ire of the department. Seen from the History Department's perspective the library's policy was poorly conceived and its principled objection led to the policy being withdrawn. There is, as always, another side to the story. The library too believed it was compelled to work with an unsatisfactory policy. In every case but one - History - the library found a way to work with departments find solutions within the policy framework without unduly interfering with academic policies. History was exceptional in its unco-operative attitude. It was obvious to us as we stumbled upon this smouldering controversy that wounds were still fresh and feelings aroused.

We cannot adjudicate the dispute, nor do we wish to take sides. We can say with some authority, however, that the impression held by the History Department that this matter is now settled and that working relations with the library have been re-established is not a conclusion we would draw on the basis of our observations. The department must work harder both with the library and the Senate Library Committee, where policies are set, to establish a more constructive relationship.

4. Custom Publication

The Review Committee discovered that the "custom publishing" developments that might reduce the department's dependence upon multiple copies and library journals for teaching

purposes are not widely understood within the department. We learned that the university bookstore has made some progress towards this goal, but that a final agreement with the appropriate copyright collectives has not yet been worked out. When these details are cleared away the members of the department ought to be able to take advantage of the custom publication possibilities inherent in the new technologies in such a way that purchased materials can play a larger role in supporting weekly reading requirements. Collections of readings can now be tailored to the requirements of individual sections and can be routinely modified to fit course changes. This might take some pressure off the Library, but custom publication of this sort is not cheap.

Effectiveness of the Administration of the Unit

The History Department has a history of sound management. As the documentation developed in the self-study make clear, from the very beginning the Department has had a very clear notion of what it wanted to be. In succession its Chairs have guided the Department forward, sometimes through vexing circumstances towards its goals. As in all intellectually lively units there has been some volatility and controversy. The important point to note is that the department has maintained its vision and strengthened itself in the process.

There is a limit to the credit administrators can claim for things, but of course no limit to what they can be blamed for. The History Department at Simon Fraser has an admirable democratic tradition as well as a reputation for being a well led department. The two do not always go together. The department appears to have entrusted its chairs with responsibility; at the same times its chairs have respected this democratic ethos.

The current chair has the complete confidence of his department and his staff. His ability to administer the department, teach and get on with his research is widely admired. He certainly impressed us with his competence and his ability on short notice to obtain the additional information we needed. We close this Report with thanks to him for his many courtesies to us and for making the work of the Review Committee as agreeable as possible. Any department that can persuade the President of the university to also teach in it is obviously well administered.