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www.sfu.ca/vpacademic**MEMORANDUM**

ATTENTION Senate
DATE February 12, 2014
FROM Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP
PAGES 1/1
RE: Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: External Review Update for the Department of History (SCUP 14-05)

At its February 5, 2014 meeting, SCUP reviewed the External Review Update Report for the Department of History within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The report is attached for the information of Senate.

c: G. Myers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Jon Driver", written in a cursive style.

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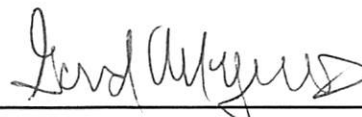
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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Jon Driver, Chair, SCUP
FROM Gord Myers, Associate Vice-President,
Academic
cc H. Pabel and J. Craig
RE: External Review Update for the Department of History

DATE December 16, 2013
PAGES 1/1



The External Review of the Department of History was undertaken in March 2010. According to the procedures established by SCUP, the Department is required to submit an update describing its progress in implementing the Action Plan, which was derived from the External Review report, in the fourth year following the start of the External Review process. Please find attached this update, together with a copy of the Action Plan approved by Senate.

Based on this midterm report, my assessment is that the Department of History has made substantial progress toward implementing the Action Plan, within the constraints imposed by its budget.



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
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Dr. Hilmar M. Pabel
Chair
778-782-4450
pabel@sfu.ca

Wednesday, 4 December 2013

Dr. Glynn Nicholls
Director, Academic Planning and Budgeting
Office of the Vice-President, Academic

Dear Dr. Nicholls,

Since I became Chair of the Department of History on 1 September 2012, we have not been at full strength. Several colleagues have been away on study leave or are currently on administrative secondment outside the Department. In the last academic year, two persons on staff (Budget Clerk; Coordinator, Communications and Recruitment) left their positions, necessitating searches for new staff and a review of job descriptions.

I report below on our progress to implement the action plan in response to the seven recommendations made by the external review in 2010.

1. Policies and procedures: I have changed the mechanism for filling Departmental committees by asking colleagues to indicate preferences for committees on which they would like to serve after the approval of a TPC. I have also circulated the Departmental criteria for tenure and promotion with a request for colleagues to indicate the need for changes in response to a question about formally recognizing electronic means of the dissemination of research. As a representative of the TPC, I have met with our only new tenure-track appointment to explain the policies on contract renewal, tenure, and promotion and Departmental expectations for contract renewal, tenure, and promotion. At the end of the meeting, I provided the colleague with hard copies of the relevant documents to which I referred. At the beginning of the academic year, I meet with faculty individually to review their research, teaching, and service. Where necessary, I bring relevant policy information to their attention, e.g. the submission of a report on research activity after a study leave, details about the application of tenure and promotion to colleagues about to apply.

2. Transparency in academic programs: Feedback from students to the Undergraduate Studies Committee has stressed providing information of course offerings as soon as possible. The annual setting of the teaching plan for the coming academic year helps us provide this information. Before I became Chair, faculty received a checklist of responsibilities for graduate supervisors and the graduate handbook was revised. We see a need to revise the graduate handbook again to provide greater clarity about requirements to students. The Graduate Program Chair and the Graduate Program Assistant meet with incoming students at the beginning of the academic year to explain program requirements. We have hosted two workshops on the graduate supervisory relationship.

3. Faculty awareness of staff work: Updated statements about staff responsibilities and duties will be uploaded to the online staff-faculty portal. Staff regularly remind faculty of deadlines for the administrative side of teaching, e.g. submission of book requisitions, course outlines, proposals for course offerings.

4. Expansion of PhD program: We have not been able consistently and considerably to expand the PhD program. SFU cannot compete financially with several other Canadian universities, which can offer more generous financial support. We have agreed with money from our Departmental Development Fund to invest in graduate scholarships and are currently discussing appropriate funds for investment with the Advancement Office in FASS.

5. Reconfiguration of MA program: We have developed a new protocol for MA students. In the first semester of their program, they will take a directed readings course with the senior supervisor to establish a good supervisory relationship and the basis for an MA thesis topic. Our required methodology and prospectus workshop seminars remain successful. With support from faculty students are now defending their thesis prospectuses by the end of the second semester, as required by the program, so that they can begin research for the thesis in the third semester.

6. Hiring priorities: I have chaired Departmental discussions on hiring priorities and have brought these priorities to the attention of the Dean of FASS in memos and personal discussions.

7. Public relations: We have had great success in engaging the university and the wider public in our research and teaching as historians. Since 2011, the department has held an annual lecture series which aims to engage the public in a meaningful dialogue about various historical and historiographical issues. Each series is built around a particular theme, and each lecture is given by an SFU historian. We continue our monthly Departmental colloquia for faculty and graduate students to showcase current research and co-sponsor with other academic units talks by visiting scholars. This semester, we revitalized our high school outreach program, which allows students the opportunity to sit in on a 100-level lecture, take a tour around campus, and ask questions about studying history. Four high school groups visited this semester during our pilot phase, and approximately 30 teachers are currently on the waiting list for the next round of visits. The news section of our redesigned website (to be launched soon) will highlight the accomplishments and activities of SFU's historians. We are particularly eager to showcase the work that our faculty members do outside of the classroom as researchers, pundits, activists, and community builders. The department has established a strong social media presence, with 963 followers on Twitter and 251 likes on Facebook. We use these channels as a means of encouraging informal discussions of historical events and topics by posting articles of interest to history students and interested community members. We are particularly fortunate to rely on the creativity and imagination of Ms. Allison McMahan, our new Coordinator, Communications and Events (a change in title from Coordinator, Communications and Recruitment) to enhance the public profile of the Department.

Thanks for your attention,





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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Hilmar Pabel, Chair, Department of History **DATE** November 7, 2013
FROM Glynn Nicholls, Director, Academic **PAGES** 16
 Planning and Budgeting
CC John Craig, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
RE: External Review Update for the Department of History

In 2004 the Senate Committee on University Priorities endorsed procedures for reviewing a unit's progress in implementing the recommendations approved by Senate as a consequence of the previous external review (which takes place normally once every seven years). The last review of the Department occurred in March 2010. This is to advise you that the External Review Update for the Department of History is due at this time.

Please provide a **one to two page** progress report by Monday, December 16, 2013 on the actions that your Department has taken in accordance with the Action Plan (copy attached), which was approved by Senate on November 1, 2010.

Please contact me at 26702, gnicholl@sfu.ca or Bal Basi at 27676, bbasi@sfu.ca if you have any questions or concerns regarding the external review update process.

Thank you.

Attach.

EXTERNAL REVIEW – ACTION PLAN

Section 1 – To be completed by the Responsible Unit Person e.g. Chair or Director				
Unit under review <i>History</i>	Date of Review Site visit	Responsible Unit person, <i>MARK LEIER</i>	Faculty Dean <i>P. McFetridge</i>	
Note: It is <u>not</u> expected that every recommendation made by the Review Team needs to be included here. The major thrusts of the Report should be identified and some consolidation of the recommendations may be possible while other recommendations of lesser importance may be excluded.				
External Review Recommendation	Unit's response notes/Comments (if any)	Action to be taken	Resource implications (if any)	Expected completion date
<p>1 The Department needs to examine carefully its policies and procedures in relation to governance, promotion and tenure, and evaluations and rewards, adopt new or revised ones where necessary, and ensure that these are well-publicized and understood</p>	<p>Department members differed widely on the question of how well-publicized policies, etc., have been. Several members, ranging from new, untenured faculty to those of several years experience, held that policies were easily available. Others disagreed. Obviously this is a question on which reasonable minds will differ. Nonetheless, the Department recognizes the responsibility and</p>	<p>We take to heart the recommendation that we address the need for more stability and "institutional memory" in our committees (page 6). We have not yet discussed extending the term of the Department chair, but are keen to reduce the service requirements for untenured faculty and to develop "bench strength" in committees through strategies such as two-year terms instead of one, staggering appointments to committees, and explicitly recruiting people to committees with the expectation that they would later serve as chair of that committee. We will formulate these ideas into specific motions for the fall Department meetings.</p> <p>Nominations for committees have been called for; through Department meetings and emails, faculty members have been asked to nominate themselves and others for all Department committees (see page 5, para 2). We will formalize our informal practice of asking people to serve on committees with the</p>	<p>Costs for workshops; opportunity costs for participants</p>	<p>Workshops: end of fall semester, 2010</p> <p>Revisions: calls for revisions, fall semester, 2010; further workshops, if required, spring semester, 2011; final revisions to Department for</p>

	<p>need to first publicize existing policies and then revise as needed.</p>	<p>expectation that they will later serve as chair.</p> <p>The chair's secretary has compiled a kit containing SFU policies and procedures regarding promotion and tenure and the Department's guidelines for promotion and tenure, and given these to people going up for promotion and tenure in 2010. She will give all other untenured faculty this material in the fall, when the Department will hold a workshop outlining the policies, procedures, and expectations. The Tenure and Promotion Committee will also hold a meeting with people undergoing salary review, contract renewal, promotion, and tenure, to go over the mandate of the Committee, its procedures, and the expectations of the Department. Faculty members will be encouraged to attend the SFUFA workshops on tenure and promotion.</p> <p>The Department will hold further workshops outlining governance policies and procedures and expectations for our committees, and will consider at that time if revision would be helpful. If the Department determines that policies and procedures need revision, we will strike a committee to bring proposals to the Department for discussion and ratification.</p> <p>We note that our efforts would be greatly enhanced if the seventh recommendation to the Faculty and Central Administration were acted on positively and our Department was provided with meaningful</p>		<p>ratification by summer 2011</p>
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		administrative training.		
<p>2 The Department needs to carry out a similar exercise to promote procedural, evaluative, and expectational consistency and transparency in its academic programs—both undergraduate and graduate.</p>	<p>We are aware of the need to clarify and communicate our policies and procedures. Clearly, posting them on the web page and the calendar are not sufficient, especially when time lags can mean that contradictory information is posted and when words such as “usually” and “normally” may not indicate common practice. There is some concern that students are not even aware that this information is available. We understand that efficiency and morale depend on our getting the information across, and this requires action beyond simply posting</p>	<p>Our undergraduate and graduate committees will be instructed to examine our procedures and policies in conjunction with students. The committees will then recommend to the Department revisions and methods to disseminate information to students. Other proposals made at recent department meeting will be examined in due course.</p> <p>A policy and procedure checklist for graduate supervisors has been created and will be distributed to Department members. The graduate student handbook is currently undergoing revision, and when completed by the fall semester, will be distributed to all graduate students and made available on our website.</p> <p>Students will be reminded regularly to consult the handbook and the calendar for policies and procedures that apply to them.</p> <p>Our recruitment and communications officer will work with the committees to create a “The Basics” page to help students understand policies and procedures.</p> <p>The graduate chair and committee will arrange regular meetings with graduate students to go over policies and procedures and to inform them of</p>		<p>Most of the above will be ongoing. The revisions to the handbook and letters will be completed for the fall semester.</p>

	the materials.	committee decisions and rationales regarding admission, funding, and other issues. The letters sent to students upon admission will be revised to reflect funding policy and ensure clarity.		
3 The Department needs to facilitate faculty awareness of the cycles of staff work.	The Department is keenly aware of the work and talent of staff, and is deeply appreciative of their commitment and efficiency. At the same time, the recent re-organization of staff positions has created new challenges and faculty members need to understand the roles of staff and the rhythm of work more thoroughly.	The chair and Department manager will prepare statements of staff responsibilities and duties, and distribute them to faculty. A timeline of events, increased workload periods, and deadlines, such as graduation, tenure and promotion, and graduate applications, will be drawn up and distributed to faculty members. Semesterly postings of staff hours and days will be distributed. Staff workloads will be evaluated and monitored, and when necessary and possible, modified.		Fall 2010 semester; ongoing as required
4 The Department should consider expanding its PhD program very	Our PhD program has always been very small, and expanding it means diverting	The graduate committee has already set out to increase our recruitment of Canadian PhD students, and has met with some success. Our plan is to recruit 2-3 more PhD students in the short-term, and		Ongoing

slowly—commensurate with faculty resources and strengths and the University's ability to provide such skills as language competency, where necessary.

resources from our very strong and successful MA program and from undergraduate teaching. Without sustained funding for students or for sessional instructors to cover undergraduate teaching, we have been reluctant to increase the PhD program. We do, however, recognize the university emphasis on producing PhDs and are committed to recruiting more PhDs. The lack of language training at SFU, however, means that we are largely restricted to supervising topics that require only English or French language skills. Furthermore, we no

increase this number gradually. Further efforts to expand will include publicizing the successes of our faculty and students, facilitating links with Canadian and non-Canadian historians in our Department to provide thematic depth for students across regions and periods, and developing a communications strategy with our recruitment and communications officer. This strategy will include surveys of incoming students and students who declined to come to SFU, increased communication with other Departments across Canada, and increased outreach through our successful students. We will work with the dean of graduate studies to develop and reallocate funding to target new PhD students and will continue our workshops on SSHRC funding, which have given our MA and PhD students an enviable success record. We will encourage faculty members to include funding for PhD research assistants in their own SSHRC applications, and will continue our recent efforts to restructure our PhD program to make it more efficient and attractive to students.'

We note that our efforts will only be successful if the fourth and fifth recommendations to the Faculty and Central Administration in this report are acted on positively and quickly: that we receive increased graduate funding and that the University explores "ways for its graduate students to acquire necessary

	<p>longer have a strength in British history, while students wishing to specialize in US history will usually be better advised to take the PhD at a US university. That means that expanding the PhD program will focus on Canadian history, where we have some real strengths and competitive advantages. Our experience, however, is that the cost of living in BC puts us at a real disadvantage in recruiting students from outside the province.</p>	<p>language skills.”</p>		
<p>5 The MA program needs to be rethought and reconfigured in realistic one-year and two-year</p>	<p>We have revised our MA program, and no longer have a three-semester thesis MA or an option for a one-year MA, as suggested</p>	<p>Better and more consistent and more accessible application materials, letters of admission, and ongoing resources are being created.</p>		<p>Fall 2010; ongoing refinement and adjustment</p>

<p>tracks.</p>	<p>in page 11 and in recommendation 5 of the external review report. Our program is a thesis MA that can be, and has been, completed in 4-5 semesters. We will admit highly qualified applicants who fall below the funding cut-off, as per the suggestion on page 11.</p> <p>Our chief need now is to make this clear to applying, incoming, and continuing students, and to reflect this in our offers of funding.</p>			
<p>6 The Department must discuss and agree upon appointment priorities, in the face of the most recent rounds of attrition, and reappraise the viability of its</p>	<p>The Department sees this as its most important and pressing task. Our numbers have been reduced considerably over the last few</p>	<p>The Department submitted a list of needed appointments last year, and has been instructed to provide a new list by August 2010. With many faculty members away for research in the summer, it is extremely difficult for us to engage in meaningful discussions by that date. We note in particular that the external review report has</p>		<p>Ongoing, 2010-2011.</p>

various undergraduate and graduate emphases and programs in light of those decisions.

years, and will shrink further in the fall of 2010. Determining appointment priorities will affect every aspect of what we do: research collaboration, undergraduate teaching, the graduate program, and meeting the vision and mission statements of the university. We note that our efforts will only be successful if the first and third recommendations to the Faculty and Central Administration were acted on positively and quickly: that the Department is given "tangible evidence of support in the form of new hires" and that the University plans "for the upcoming problem of faculty

stressed the need for open processes and democratic decision-making (pages 5-7 and Department Recommendation 1) and we would add that these require time to be meaningful and effective. Nonetheless, we have begun electronic ballots and discussions to determine our list of most pressing appointments and will submit this list in July 2010.

This will mark the beginning, not the end, of our work to reappraise our undergraduate and graduate emphases and programs. In the fall 2010 semester, the Department will undertake a strategic planning process to set priorities and determine the direction of the Department. This will include, but not be restricted to, retreats and workshops to ensure this is a collegial, inclusive process.

We note that to be meaningful and productive, this work requires that the University act on the first and third recommendations to the Faculty and Central Administration: that the Department is given "tangible evidence of support in the form of new hires" and that the University plans "for the upcoming problem of faculty retention."

retention.”

We would add that we agree with the recommendation made in the review that that untenured faculty in joint appointments should be given the opportunity to transfer to one department immediately (page 26). We have begun the work necessary for this, and look forward to the situation being resolved in the very near future.

We would further add that we entirely support the external reviewers’ recommendation to maintain the tutorial system (page 16) while attending to imbalances in TA

allocations. We strongly support the reviewers' assessment of the strengths and value of the tutorial system and will work to maintain it and to ensure that faculty workloads are fair and equitable.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that the external reviewers noted that History is highly productive as a research department. We have a long reputation for excellent scholarship and research, and our renewal over the past seven years has continued this reputation. But as the reviewers noted, faculty members need help and support to deliver their next books and retention is a crucial issue. Thus

	<p>History strongly supports the external review's second recommendation to the Faculty and Central Administration, that "the University should consider earmarking the equivalent of one large CTEF grant for FASS faculty to be awarded within the Faculty according to criteria that suit the research models and timelines of Humanities and Social Science scholars."</p>			
<p>7 The Department should take the lead in exploring ways of demonstrating to the central administration and the public the</p>	<p>We agree wholeheartedly with this recommendation, and are entirely supportive of the recent FASS initiative to appoint a communications</p>	<p>We will continue to support and encourage faculty members to address historical and contemporary issues in the public media, and note that many already do extensive work in the community. We have created an ad hoc committee on communications and community that will explore ways to increase our visibility in the media and the broader community. We will work with teachers to</p>		<p>Ongoing.</p>

<p>accomplishments of humanities scholars and teachers.</p>	<p>expert. We will support this initiative by having our communications officer work with the FASS communications person and by increasing our own efforts to demonstrate our accomplishments to the University and the public.</p> <p>History is uniquely placed in FASS for this role as it is a teachable major for PDP students; essential to understanding current events and formulating policy; highly popular as a subject among the general public; both global and rooted in local communities; and trans-disciplinary in approach and</p>	<p>bring high school students to our lectures and will step up our outreach to the two-year community colleges and four-year universities. We will approach the City of Vancouver to put together a series of historical lectures for 2011, the 125th anniversary of the founding of the city.</p> <p>Within the University, we will work to demonstrate the work of the Department and FASS in general. Our recruitment and communications officer regularly asks Department members for news and information on their teaching and research, and ensures this is put on the FASS website. The chair of the Department is on the FASS Vision Working Group, which is charged to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using the draft vision document (June 2009), develop FASS vision and mission statements 2. Consult with the Strategy Working Group and other stakeholders 3. Identify and develop measurements of success in all areas of teaching, research and community engagement 4. Identify and propose Key Performance Indicators for FASS 5. Consider both short and long-term proposals <p>Thus History is well-situated to help determine and demonstrate FASS's direction in the university and</p>		
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Section 2 - Dean's comments and endorsement of the Action Plan :

The History Department is to be congratulated for a strong external review. The FASS Dean's office is in complete agreement that this is a collegial and well-run department. The recent hires have been exceptional and the research productivity of the Department is first rate. Likewise, staff are all operating at a high level.

With regards to the recommendations and action plans attached, we are in complete agreement with the steps suggested. They all seem designed to increase efficiency and collegiality within the department, as well as the smooth running of the graduate programs.


There are several larger issues addressed in the external review, which call for comment by the dean.

1. Language training. I am in agreement that in order for History to have a robust and multi-faceted PhD program, serious language instruction is a necessity. The future of language instruction at SFU looks slightly brighter than it did when the external review was written, but it still remains the case that all language instruction takes place only through 4 semesters, with the exception of French. We do have strong instruction to 4 semesters in Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and German. I would suggest to the History Department that they think creatively about how to give students more facility in needed languages. First, we have a large student population who speak and read other languages. Especially in Asian history, it might well be possible to attract students who already have facility in appropriate languages. Second, the FASS Dean's office would be happy to work with History to clarify and encourage the possibility of SFU graduate students taking language courses at UBC. Third, the Department should explore the possibility of fundraising for summer immersion programs for students, as well as facilitating students applying for scholarships and bursaries for such instruction (for example, DAAD for German immersion and the JET program for Japanese).

2. Faculty renewal. This is a difficult issue. History has been hard hit in the last few years with unexpected vacancies, resulting in a number of non-strategic holes in their program. Particularly egregious is the complete lack of African history – an area of importance to SFU from its foundation and one that has been a notable draw for students over the years. Equally, British history in particular and European history in general have been decimated. Unfortunately, in order to make the cuts necessary in the past few years, FASS has had to surrender every vacant position and it seems likely this will continue to be the case for at least 3 or 4 more years. Therefore, while I want to acknowledge that History has a legitimate claim to positions, it seems unlikely that they will receive more than one or two over the next 3 years and planning should be done on that basis.

3. Process and communications. The Department has recognized that while it has explicit procedures for decision making, re-examining them is a valuable exercise, particularly for junior colleagues who may be unaware of those procedures and as a reminder to others in the Department. In general, the Department is looking to communicate more broadly its academic programmes, the procedures by which decisions are made and resources allocated and the administration of the Department. These efforts will certainly benefit students, staff and faculty.

Faculty Dean

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Date

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July 13/18
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