Final Assessment Report
History (BA, Minor)
January 2020

Executive Summary
External reviewers found that the Bachelor of Arts in History and Minor in History delivered by the Department of History were in good standing.

“We believe all undergraduate programs are in good standing. The Department of History includes engaged and productive historians who deliver courses that are consistently ranked, by students, of high quality”

A total of five recommendations were provided by the reviewers, touching on curricular and governance improvements, and increased support for the program. In response, the program created a plan outlining the specific actions proposed to address each recommendation as well as a timeline for implementation. The next cyclical review for this program is scheduled for 2024-2025.

Total Enrolment in all Undergraduate Year Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Honours</th>
<th>Co-op</th>
<th>Minor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
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*based on Active Students Extract pulled from Quest January 14, 2020

Background
In accordance with the University of Waterloo’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response of the Department of History. A self-study (Volume I, II, III) was submitted to the Associate Vice-President, Academic on September 28, 2018. The self-study (Volume I) presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the programs, including the data collected from a student survey, along with the standard data package prepared by the Office of Institutional Analysis & Planning (IAP). The CVs for each faculty member with a key role in the delivery of the program(s) were included in Volume II of the self-study.
From Volume III, two arm’s-length external reviewers were selected by the Associate Vice-President, Academic: Dr. David Wright, Professor of History & Classical Studies, McGill University, and Dr. Dominique Marshall, Professor of History, Carleton University.

Reviewers appraised the self-study documentation and conducted a site visit to the University on December 6-7, 2018. An internal reviewer from the University of Waterloo, Dr. Bill Anderson, Professor of Chemical Engineering, was selected to accompany the external reviewers. The visit included interviews with the Associate Vice-President, Academic; Dean of the Faculty of Arts; Arts Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies; Chair of the Department of History; faculty members; staff and current students. The review team also had an opportunity to meet with representatives from the Library and Co-operative Education.

This final assessment report is based on information extracted, in many cases verbatim, from the self-study, the external reviewers’ report and the program response.

Program Characteristics
The Department of History offers the following degree options (majors/minors).

- The **Three-Year General History** program balances a wealth of flexibility in course selection with attentiveness to methodology, temporal range and disciplinary depth. On average, since 2010, 12.5% of the Department’s students annually have graduated with the Three-Year General degree. It requires a minimum major average of 65% and at least 12 history courses.

- The **Four-Year General History** program is similar to the Honours degrees, meaning that the graduating students more closely attain proficiency in their learning outcomes. Those in the Four-Year General plan have consistently accounted for about 25% of the Department’s graduates annually. The program requires a minimum major average of 65% and at least 16 history courses.

- The **Honours History** program offers students flexibility in their studies, and the scope to define their fourth year experience in ways most meaningful to them. Students graduate with detailed and complex knowledge bases, proficient research, communication and diversity skills, and the ability to apply their knowledge and skills autonomously as emerging professionals in a variety of workplace or graduate degree settings. It requires a minimum major average of 70% and at least 16 history courses. There was a high of 85 graduates in the History majors in 2010 (32 General, 8 Honours Co-op, 45 Honours) to a low of 34 in 2016 (9 General, 5 Honours Co-op, 20 Honours).

- The **History Minor** is a flexible plan of 8 courses accessible to any student at the University of Waterloo. The minimum Minor average is 65%, requiring 8 history courses, two above HIST 250. There were between 27-47 students registered in the minor from 2010-2016.
The Department also offers four specializations:

- **Applied History**: Practical, real-world uses for the past in society and the marketplace.
- **Global Interactions**: Exploring human interactions on a global scale.
- **International Relations**: A joint program with Political Science.
- **Revolution, War, and Upheaval**: Examining the impact of conflict on the course of history.

**Summary of Strengths, Challenges and Weaknesses based on Self-Study**

**Strengths**
- Strong retention factor, with an overall retention of 85.5%. When students enrol in History, they are strongly inclined to remain in the discipline.
- Strong representation of graduates on Dean’s Honours List
- Co-operative education as a differentiating factor of the program
- Teaching evaluations exceed faculty average on all counts
- From the perspective of the learners, numerous strengths include: becoming disciplinary experts, as Honours graduates, mastering the concepts, methods, theories and skills of the discipline of History; classroom experience; great professors (both sessional and regular); access to co-op; level of support; sense of belonging; ability to complete program successfully

**Challenges**
- Sharp decline in History majors in period of self-study; attracting majors
- Sharp decline in History course enrolments in period of self-study; attracting students of history
- Co-ordination with AFIW (especially with regard to 1xx and 4xx course scheduling)
- How to recast the reality of being a Department teaching increasingly to non-majors (or “service teaching”) into a positive
- Anxiety about impact of activity based budgeting at departmental level
- Better integration of undergraduate students into Department events (e.g., Speaker Series)
- Communicating the value of a History and Arts education within and beyond the academy and addressing student-expressed concerns about the place of History/Arts in a STEM dominated institution
- Possibility of developing a suite of online courses appealing to general public and cross-faculty interest, such as sport, film, and the internet
- Heavy departmental administrative weight (Chair, two Associate Chairs, and in 2019 Directorship of the Tri-University graduate program). Four administrative roles is a significant ratio in a Department of this size and also impacts teaching / course offerings.
Shift to a new emphasis upon Spring teaching by regular faculty. Impacts Fall/Winter course offerings and TA allocations.

Lacking community space for faculty

Weaknesses

- Smallest faculty complement in History in U15 – makes diversity of offerings difficult and impact of service roles difficult to bear
- The inclusion of all historians in our “Department” description at UW and AFIW suggests our FTE complement is far larger than it is
- Ability to perform departmental, faculty, and university service is affected by small complement – this will become particularly critical with upcoming and eligible retirements (a potential total of four)
- From a student perspective weaknesses are: lack of attention to career development at department level; lack of diversity in course offerings (e.g., beyond Europe and North America); sense of self and value of discipline in STEM-dominated UW

Summary of Key Findings from the External Reviewers

“We believe all undergraduate programs are in good standing. The Department of History includes engaged and productive historians who deliver courses that are consistently ranked, by students, of high quality”; “Although the program is currently in good standing, it should be monitored closely in the coming years to ensure that the students are receiving a quality undergraduate experience in History. We believe, however, that the leadership of the department is well placed to initiate reforms in an open-minded and collaborative fashion”.

Program Response to External Reviewer Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs: The History programs are currently in good standing, and we received excellent, and largely positive, feedback on the students’ experience from the Co-Op office. However, questions arise as to the long-term viability of the stand-alone Honours History BA at the University of Waterloo. Course offerings are limited in breadth, class sizes are small, and potential honours History students have too many other options in Southwestern Ontario. It is hard to imagine that one new tenure-stream hire will be able to fill the looming gap in providing courses on ‘the rest of the world’ or reverse the long-term trends in program students. Indeed, one wonders whether the next seven years (to the next review) should be one of carefully managed contraction, seeing more energy devoted to the Co-Op Honours (which cannot be pursued elsewhere in Southwestern Ontario), the continuation of the rest of the History programs (joint Honours with another subject; minor in History, four year BA, three year BA) as well as the administrative merger with another unit, of which Classics would be the obvious (but not only) option.
Program Response

History intends, as the reviewers recommend, to continue to monitor the “stand-alone” Honours BA over the next seven years. The program is encouraged by increasing enrollments, as discussed below, and will maintain their commitment to strong participation in Arts recruiting and outreach, curricular programming and flexible degree paths that fulfill the needs of today’s Arts learners and graduates, supporting students’ awareness of and ability to articulate the value of their degree, and to the academic rigour expected in the program that continues to attract strong students to UW History. Specifically, the reviewers recommend:

“seeing more energy devoted to the Co-Op Honours (which cannot be pursued elsewhere in Southwestern Ontario), the continuation of the rest of the History programs (joint Honours with another subject; minor in History, four year BA, three year BA) ...”

The recommendation concerning Co-op is discussed below. It is difficult to over-state the value History has always seen in systematically reviewing the health of their program streams and they agree with the reviewers that they should continue to do so. The health of the regular Honours BA stream in particular (a plan that is standardized with the joint Honours, four year BA, and four year Honours Co-op BA the reviewers recommend History maintain) is a primary focus. The program has and will continue address the reviewers’ three specific concerns around breadth, class size, and the fact that there are “many other options in Southwestern Ontario” by continuing to hire diversely and engaging in course development to offer greater breadth, expanding class sizes through offerings attractive to non-majors, and differentiating their program as a whole, largely in its association with UW Co-op.

History agreed with the recommendation to “rally-around” the Co-op program and are happy that the reviewers have flagged this differentiating factor. Indeed, the Co-op program in History differentiates the program from others in Ontario, and most of Canada. The Department is committed to its continuing success, especially as they realized a 27% increase in enrollment with the full launch of Co-op in Fall 2017, and have since realized another increase of 22%. The reviewers were aware of these increases, however they were not formally presented with this data as the self-study only covered the years 2010/11 to 2016/17 (pre-dating this recent increase). There may well be other explanations for the increase; however, the enrollment increases are predominantly within the Co-op stream. Nevertheless, the emphasis on “decline” in the reviewers’ report should be balanced against this recent evidence of increasing enrollment. History is a mid-sized program in the Faculty of Arts, with with 88 HIST majors in Fall 2018.
Still, as the reviewers’ note, and as the self-study captures, History’s numbers have declined sharply since the last cyclical review, which is a key context to all departmental planning. Regardless, History is encouraged by the enrollment increases, and will strive to continue them with a goal in the 200s, in line with disciplinary partners in Political Science and English).

History has already made great strides in the direction of this recommendation to “rally-around the Co-op,” shifting its teaching loads, especially tenure-line, around and making required field courses at the 2xx level available in the Spring term, as well as options at the required 3xx level. While largely intended to meet the needs of Co-op students, the shift to more Spring teaching by regular faculty has also brought the unexpected bonus of very healthy student enrolment from other Arts programs and the other five faculties. History recognizes that students are experiencing the departmental Co-op in History as a way of integrating more fully with the UW “experience” or “brand” which was something students in Honours History and Arts & Business Co-op have long expressed. However, History acknowledges it can do more to support Co-op and the students in it, and they have made a continuing commitment to address this.

History feels that neither the Department nor UW students in History would be well served by a mandatory Co-op. There are many reasons why students choose to opt-out of Co-op; these students still need continued access to their Honours program as a regular course of study. The History Department would also be loath to lose Honours students should they opt out of Co-op. Similarly, other students choose UW History for reasons unrelated to Co-op and the Department has every wish to encourage their enrollment. Finally, mandatory Co-op is not a valuable recruitment tool, based on experience at events such as the Ontario Universities Fair, in any Arts programming beyond Accounting & Finance. Similarly, offering a non-Co-op option to students does not require any departmental additional resources. History is open to, and would welcome, administrative reform. That may take the form of the administrative merger the reviewers discussed with us – namely, “pools” of administrative support staff working for multiple departments in Arts, or the more specific suggestion here of a two-department support unit. History will constructively participate in any faculty-level conversations enabling administrative reform to better support departmental needs for everyone.

2. **Governance:** We recommend a new approach to departmental administration, including: (1) a regular slot blocked out (by registrar’s office/registration) for 3 or 4 department meetings per term scheduled well in advance; (2) a small number of department committees to support the Chair, the Associate Chairs and other crucial activities; and (3) the inclusion of AFIW
faculty members in the meetings and in those committees. We have found that including student representatives of all programs, and a representative of sessionals, in the open Departmental meetings and in the relevant Committees (within the limits of what the constitution of the University allows) has benefits for the department as a whole.

Program Response
There are three clear components to this recommendation: a) scheduling; b) departmental committees; and c) AFIW colleagues’ participation.

a) History will work to schedule meetings as recommended; beginning in the W20 semester we will apply a Level 2 constraint to all UW HIST instructors, for example, for Fridays after 2:30 – enabling everyone to attend at this time.

b) This recommendation has been followed in the past, and will be implemented again. History recently convened an ad-hoc “Governance” or “By-law” Committee in order to codify several sets of administrative relationships within the Department, as well with AFIW. One AFIW colleague is a member of this committee. The committee has since drafted a set of recommendations, pending departmental approval, that defer to UW Policy, and clarify the following issues of governance, and include the creation of the recommended departmental committees: Department membership, Departmental Advisory Committee on Appointments (DACA) composition, Promotion and Tenure practice, appointment of Associate Chairs, the administrative relationship with AFIW colleagues, frequency of department meetings, Approved Doctoral Dissertation Supervisor (ADDS) status, workload expectations, Standing Sub-Committees (Executive, UG, Grad, Communications & Speakers’ Series), and, amendments to the by-laws.

c) AFIW members have always been and are always invited to Department meetings on main campus and are included in regular lines of communication. The intent of this recommendation has been the practice in History for decades. History has benefitted from the involvement of our AFIW colleagues in department meetings, in decision-making with Graduate admissions, etc., On a similar note, Professor Jane Nicholas, a colleague at St. Jerome’s, has agreed to serve, on behalf of UW History, as the next Director of the Tri-University Graduate Program, which is a demanding, three-year-long administrative position. Enabling this appointment required close cooperation between the Chairs and the upper administration of the Faculty of Arts and St. Jerome’s University, and speaks to the collegial relationship with the AFIW.

Department meetings include both undergraduate and graduate student representation. Typically the current chair of the History Society represents undergraduate students; a member of the Tri-University Society represents graduate students. We are open to having a sessional representative in attendance, and can
raise the issue with them, while remaining aware that attendance at meetings is unremunerated.

3. Course Offerings: The Department is clearly making an effort to mount courses that are attractive to students both within History, in Arts, and within the university. Some faculty members felt dispirited by the decline of (formerly) popular courses. It is noteworthy that the decline in course enrollments can be seen across the board (as mentioned above). Opinion as to whether things were being exacerbated by disparate factors -- (1) the process of registration and scheduling; (2) imperfect coordination between ‘competing’ courses in the ‘regular’ Department and the colleges; (3) the emergence of new interdisciplinary programs more attractive to students -- was open to different perspectives from stakeholders. We have no magic solution, save to reemphasize the need to identify courses that naturally complement the strengths of the university, including: environmental history, transnational/IR history, and the history of science and technology. There might also be an opportunity to think of methods/theory/skills courses that would be collaborative and would signal to students explicitly the existence of a variety of fields within the Department, in the colleges and, maybe, at the University of Waterloo. A more judicious use of interuniversity registrations with Wilfrid Laurier, and a renewed planning in coordination with the AFIW, would also help in this direction, as would hiring proposals drafted in coordination with other strong units in campus.

Program Response
The Department appreciates the hard work and suggestions of the reviewers in this regard; however, after careful discussion of past initiatives in these fields, History is unsure about the wisdom of introducing courses on "environmental history" and the "history of science and technology." The few times that they have offered environmental history (as recently as 2016), the enrollments were in the single digits. Years ago, they offered a course on the history of Engineering that fared even more poorly which was likely attributable to the fact that other faculties offered similar courses, thus limiting their growth potential in these areas. Instead, History will continue the excellent strides they have made in Digital History, which reflects the larger mandate of UW in terms of innovation, and in Public History, which also captures the intent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Anecdotally, History has learned from those who teach classes that reach all faculties in the University, such as Math, Engineering, Science, Applied Health Studies and Environment, that these students are looking for classes that open up new vistas of learning to them, and are accessible to non-Arts students. Hence, History believes the key to their success in attracting non-Arts students is to continue to make them inviting to students outside of Arts, and in other Arts programs; to focus on innovations in their teaching; and to continue to explore options with online teaching, which will open even more doors to other students on campus.
Diversity, breadth, depth, methodological and pedagogical reach is becoming increasingly challenging for History, given its small FTE complement, especially with imminent retirements – at least 4 - in key fields. Without a guarantee of future tenure line or continuing hires, History is unable to expand geographic, thematic, temporal, methodological etc. program components. The reviewers indicated that the “the presence of seven historians at the affiliated ‘colleges’ (AFIW) has cushioned ... faculty complement, and provided an effective teaching cluster (15 + 7) that is, in reality, as large as some competitor universities.” These historians strengthen programming in HIST; the AFIW and UW leadership work to coordinate course offerings to eliminate “competition” for enrollment. However, the numbers of AFIW faculty as noted by the reviewers are misleading: of the FTE complement on main campus, two senior administrators do not teach at all in the program, and another, appointed to the Balsillie, teaches only one course per annum. Typically, there are 12 active FTE instructors, subject to availability as determined by sabbatical, leave, and administrative course release. In addition, the reviewers refer to 7 History FTE at the AFIW. It is correct that there are 7 ‘historians’ at the AFIW, but most are cross-appointed or have teaching responsibilities in non-History departments(e.g., Epp in PACS, Nicholas in SMF, Llewellyn in SDS, Bednarski in MEDVL, and Osborne in the administrative role of Dean at CGC). In the last calendar year, (Fall, Winter, Spring 2018-19), the 7 “historians” at the AFIW noted in the reviewers’ report, taught a total of five courses in the History program. Hence, the AFIW teaching capacity in History does not represent 7 FTE (though all do scholarship in History) and thus the reviewers’ calculation of 15+7 = comparable capacity to other competitors is not accurate.

4. Administrative Support: The system of administrative support is clearly broken. This must be demoralizing for faculty and students alike, and most of all to the administrative staff themselves, who appear to stay no longer than one year or two. It would appear that the Dean (or the new Dean, as we understand the current Dean is not seeking a new term) must seriously consider the reorganization of administrative support. Several universities have moved away from the traditional model of the PG and UG coordinator positions servicing only one department, since they are prone to the very problems that currently plague the Department of History at Waterloo. Pooled administrative resources between cognate departments (for example: English, History, Classics) would provide an administrative centre of 6-8 administrative staff, who could provide coverage during leaves and holidays, specialize in different areas, cross-train, identify best practices, create more opportunities for promotion for staff looking for mobility, have common points of communications with the AFIWs, and (hopefully) enjoy better job satisfaction. Although this type of reform often entails moving the staff members away from the premises of the Department, and a certain amount of retraining, the gains are potentially numerous. It might increase retention of administrative staff, help foster and manage cooperation between units in matter of recruitment and events, and ensure a regular attention to everyday students’ demands. Such a new system of pooled administrative staff is not a panacea, and we are conscious that it needs to respect...
the HR grade system specific to Waterloo. However, it is hard to imagine it could be worse than the current situation.

**Program Response**

History is proud of their staff and the fine work they do to support programs, students, and faculty. At the same time, they would wholeheartedly welcome a renewed system of stable administrative support that fulfills both the needs of the Department and program administratively, and the career goals and work-life balance of the administrative support staff themselves. At present, History must adhere to the Faculty of Arts support staff model as it currently exists given that the matter is beyond immediate departmental control. However, History has informed the Dean of Arts about this recommendation as it is under his purview to make such changes.

5. **Future Hires:** It would appear that aligning with successful programs and units could prove most prudent. One could envisage positions that are both geographically reinforcing of existing strengths in Western (Euro-North American) history while having a research focus (and upper year teaching interest) in the history of science and technology (or interest in Science and Technology Studies). Another possibility might be someone who could bridge the rising interest in Legal Studies with History (in the form of legal history, for example) or even another position in the history of global governance or humanitarianism (synergies with Political Science). A third example might be the emerging (and very popular) area of environmental history, which could (obviously) easily overlap with indigenous history as well. Another avenue would be to engage the AFIW in the reflection by leveraging the existing synergies created around common research endeavours such as those of Professor Lewellyn.

**Program Response**

The recommendation of the reviewers is well taken and appreciated. History’s recent hire in Global History both reinforces its current offerings and opens up a number of other geographic regions, temporal areas, methodological approaches, etc. in exciting ways. Should the opportunity to hire a tenure-line or continuing colleague present itself again, History will take this recommendation seriously. The Department is also open to collaborative efforts with other units. Previous attempts to offer Science & Technology courses (for example, in conjunction with the interdisciplinary Centre for Society Technology and Values) have simply not drawn student interest, and that the programs across-campus, non-major, students are frequently STEM-refugees. History is uncertain about how a hire in Science and Technology would be “reinforcing of existing strengths.” The program would like the opportunity to clarify, perhaps in a retreat, the research directions of the Department as a whole before pursuing such a future hire.
### Implementation Plan

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<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Proposed Actions</th>
<th>Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions</th>
<th>Timeline for addressing Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Undergraduate Programs</strong></td>
<td>Systematically review regular Honours BA “rally-around” the Co-op program</td>
<td>The Department Chair, and the new departmental undergraduate committee will continue to actively monitor the enrollments, diversity, breadth, and value of the program. Classroom enrollments and declared majors (honours, co-op, and general) and minors are the primary indicator by which we guage the health of the program and student responsiveness to it. The Department Chair will continue to “rally-around” the co-op, as supported by all faculty and staff members, and will continue to pay due attention to the health of all program aspects. Summer term classes have been scheduled to facilitate the co-op stream. Foresee no need for additional resources beyond existing.</td>
<td>Already implemented and on-going.</td>
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<td><strong>2. Governance</strong></td>
<td>1. History’s practice of scheduling department meetings will embrace the suggestion to involve the scheduling office by applying a Level 2 constraint to all instructors for a 90 minute block – likely Friday after 2:30. 2. History has drafted departmental by-laws that create three permanent committees (executive, graduate, and UG),</td>
<td>1. The Chair will continue to schedule meetings three times a semester, now using a Level 2 constraint, and continue to welcome AFIW participation. 2. These committees are now in existence (pending departmental approval). Foresee no need for additional resources beyond existing.</td>
<td>1. and 3. Have been in existence for a number of years; 2. applying Level 2 constraint will begin for W20</td>
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and will continue their practice of creating ad-hoc committees.
3. AFIW members are and have always been invited to participate in all departmental meetings and committee work. This practice will continue.

| 3. **Course Offerings** | The Department will “continue to tailor” courses to “complement the strengths of the University.” | The Department will continue its long-standing practice of developing curriculum that complements program strengths at UW.

With the exception of the possibility of developing a suite of on-line courses (a new online course on the History of the Internet launched in W20), we foresee no need for additional resources beyond existing.

| 4. **Administrative Support** | The Department is supportive but must adhere to the Faculty of Arts support staff model as it currently exists and the matter is beyond immediate departmental control. | The Chair has communicated this recommendation to the Dean of Arts.

We anticipate leadership for any reform of the staffing model will come from the Office of the Dean.

| 5. **Future Hires** | The recent hire in Global History referenced reinforces History’s current offerings, and opens up a number of other areas in exciting ways. When there is again opportunity to hire a tenure-line colleague, History will take this recommendation seriously. | Departmental Hiring Committee and DACA.

Resource needs are those associated with tenure-lines.

To be determined in consultation with the Dean of Arts. No consultation has yet begun.

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The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for the Implementation Plan.
Date of next program review: 2024-2025

Signatures of Approval

Chair/Director: July 23, 2020

Sheila Ager

AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (For AFIW programs only): July 29, 2019

Faculty Dean

Note: AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and administration of the program.

Associate Vice-President, Academic
(For undergraduate and augmented programs): Date

Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
(For graduate and augmented programs): Date