

## **Program Assessment for Fiscal Year 2006**

**Program Name: Master of Arts in History**

**Date: October 31, 2006**

**College: Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

### **A. Mission Statement**

Our mission is to graduate students who will follow a variety of objectives after successful completion of the Master of Arts degree in history. It will deliver M.A. candidates effective historical instruction which will allow them, to pursue and compete in ancillary professions that require pronounced emphasis on factual knowledge and historical data. It will prepare and educate M.A. candidates who wish to enter a career in teaching history and the social studies at the primary, secondary levels and/or post-secondary education in private and public school systems. One aspect of the mission is to provide M.A. candidates an opportunity to pursue the Master of Arts degree in our Public History Program. Successful students completing the M.A. as part of career training will pursue a number of diverse occupations such as college professors, private and public school teachers, archivists, museum professionals, journalists, lawyers, clergy, and public service. Students who complete the M.A. for personal enrichment will be prepared for a lifetime of personal study and service, including service on community boards and through historical and community organizations.

### **Assessment of Program Objectives**

**Objective 1: To enroll at least five new qualified graduate students each year who view the Master of Arts degree either as a terminal degree or as an interim goal in the path of progression towards the Completion of the Ph.D. in history. Between four and five students will enroll who have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in history and an overall 2.75 grade point average.**

**a. At least four of students admitted to the program met the standards for “full standing” per academic year**

FY 2006:      21 students admitted to M.A. program  
                    2 students denied

**b. At least five enrolled in the master’s program per academic year**

FY 2006:      10 new students enrolled in M.A.

**Objective 2: To sustain a highly qualified faculty involved in scholarly research and publication that will enhance their professional status, keep them abreast of current issues and methodologies that can be brought into the graduate classroom experience.**





In summer 2006, the director of the public history program brought together a meeting of the graduate coordinator, the department chair, and several individuals who have taught in the public history program to discuss changes such as emphasizing community history and emphasizing the non-career, avocational aspects of public history. In addition, the arrival of a new curator of special collections has allowed further discussion on these issues.

**Objective 4: To provide the local Wichita community-at-large with public service and intellectual stimulation that increases knowledge and creates individual and collective interest in the people and institutions of our society.**

During the 2005 academic year, faculty were very active in the local community. Among some of the activities were:

**1. Students will demonstrate effective writing skills when conveying knowledge base information.**

\*\*\*\* See Appendix B for attached syllabi for HIS 725, HIS 729, HIS 730, HIS 733, HIS 734

**2. Students will master the knowledge bases in at least one of the following fields congruent with option selected: U.S., Ancient/Medieval, European, and Public History**

**a. Students will successfully complete (grade B or better) courses for the different tracks. The student and advisor together determine appropriate four to five relevant knowledge-based courses.**

Semester	Students	Number who received GPA's of B or higher in 500, 600, and 700-level classes		
Summer 2005	19	16	84%	3 dropped
Fall 2005	102	69	68%	25 dropped
Spring 2006	92	70	76%	17 dropped

(See Appendix C for raw data)

**b. Demonstrate the professional skills in history necessary to pass the exams on the knowledge base.**

During academic year 2005, 11 students took comprehensive exams and 10 passed.

**c. Thesis track students demonstrate original work in their thesis.**

During academic year 2005, the following students successfully defended their thesis work:

Devin Brogan  
Bruce Carruthers  
Erin M. Doom

**d. Students in the public history track complete the internship to demonstrate that they can apply public history theory and practice in a public setting**

During academic year 2005, six students took internship or cooperative education in fall 2005. Seven students signed up for internship or cooperative education credit in spring 2006. There was one student taking internship credit in summer 2006

**3. Students will demonstrate the professional research, writing, and oral presentation skills in history necessary for effective teaching and public history work.**

As mentioned in the attached syllabi, students in HIS 725 are required to do research papers. In addition, public history students do final papers to receive grades for internship and cooperative education related activities.

**Feedback Loop**

In conducting this assessment the Department recognizes that it must continue to engage in an annual review of its Master's program in History to determine if it is on the right path to maintain an effective and productive degree program. This was done during the review period.

The data reveals that the number and quality of students admitted into the program is measuring up to the Department's expectations, and those students admitted have performed in a manner consistent with the matrix developed for the program and have progressed to graduation in a timely manner.

There are concerns that have been generated by the assessment process:

1. There are points in the record keeping process where the department loses sight of its M.A. students. Most notably after a student completes the defense of the thesis, the committee recommendation form goes directly to the Graduate School, but the Graduate Coordinator is not informed in a consistent and timely manner about the result of the defense. Therefore, the department is not aware of the actual number of students who are graduating. Either at the departmental level or the Graduate School level, more feedback is needed about students who have completed all of the degree requirements
2. More effective, but less complicated ways need to be found to complete assessment of the Department's M.A. program. The amount of staff time required to complete the report is an unnecessary intrusion into the basic function of the faculty, which is to teach and to pursue scholarship for the advancement of knowledge.