Summary

Graduate Program in History
Cyclical Review Year 2014-2015

Prepared by the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Meeting of May 13, 2015

<table>
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<th>Name of Program Reviewed</th>
<th>History</th>
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| Degrees                  | • Master of Arts (MA) in History and  
                          • Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in History |
| Fields                   | No fields have been identified for the master’s level. |
|                          | The PhD in History has the following fields: |
|                          | 1. Canada and North America |
|                          | 2. Europe |
|                          | 3. Women, Gender, and the Family |
|                          | 4. Empire, Colonization, and Decolonization |
|                          | 5. War, Conflict, and Diplomacy |
| Final Evaluation         | Good quality |

Significant Strengths of the Program

The Department of History offers a well-established MA and PhD program, and both external evaluators were impressed by the number and quality of the faculty members who are competent to teach and/or supervise in the program. Also, they noted that the syllabi of the graduate courses were complete and rigorously developed. The MA program includes “non-traditional” elements that enhance its reach and are well-perceived by the students. Moreover, the funding for the two-year MA thesis option is very beneficial for students. The very good work produced by the MA students was acknowledged by the external consultants and is also confirmed by the number of SSHRC and OGS scholarships awarded (at both MA and PhD levels). The CO-OP option for the MA program particularly enhances the practical options for students during their graduate programs.

The PhD program enhances its degree by offering a Canadian Studies collaborative program option, which is a particular strength of the Department. The compulsory bilingual seminar offered at the beginning of the second year is regarded as a significant innovation, and provides the students with an opportunity to hone their research skills and gain additional analytical skills. Time-to-completion, particularly for PhD students, was much better than the provincial average.

The strong sense of collegiality developed in the Department and the dedication of the excellent Administrative Assistant for Graduate Studies were also singled out as important factors that contribute to the overall good quality of the graduate program.

Areas for Improvement and Enhancement

The external evaluators found that the currently listed PhD fields no longer reflect the strengths of the
Department as a whole. In light of the recent faculty members hired, the evaluators recommended that the Department rethink its research strengths and replace the formal fields with a list of research strengths or clusters that encompass all the thematic options linked to faculty research areas.

The doctoral fields were found to have varying workloads and requirements, and a review of the field guidelines is recommended. The students’ online handbook should clearly convey the most pertinent information required by graduate students.

Although the Department’s move to its new location has provided them with more space, many students said they had difficulty working and studying on campus. The external evaluators acknowledged that insufficient space is a challenge throughout the university and even throughout the province. The Department is encouraged to address this problem by informing students from the beginning, as well as by trying to increase the workspace available.

The current faculty member resources of the Department were found to be of very good quality. However, it was noted that 7 of the 26 full-time professors will be eligible for retirement over the next five years. Strategic planning with departmental and faculty support will be required to successfully hire new faculty members with a strong reputation for research and excellent teaching skills to maintain the good quality of the program.

Recommendations

1. The PhD fields should be replaced by clusters that integrate the research interests and the strengths of the program’s faculty members.
2. The Department, in conjunction with the Faculty of Arts and senior administration, should develop a strategy for recruiting new professors.
3. A review of the guidelines for several PhD program procedures, such as the reading workload for the fields and the oral examination, is recommended.
4. Ensure appropriate research and study space for graduate students.

Implementation Plan

Calendar and Deadlines
All noted recommendations should be addressed at the time of the next cyclical review scheduled for 2022 – 2023.

Authorities
The authorities who are responsible for implementing and monitoring the recommendations include the Dean and Vice-Dean (Graduate Studies) of the Faculty of Arts, the Director of the Graduate Program in History, and the Director of the Department of History.