



History

Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

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| Faculty / Affiliated University College | Huron University College |
| Degrees Offered | B.A. |
| Modules Reviewed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honours Specialization in History • Specialization in History • Major in History |
| External Consultants | Dr. Eyllt Jones, Dean of Studies and Professor, St. John’s College, University of Manitoba Dr. Yvonne Petry, Academic Dean and Professor of History Luther College, University of Regina |
| Internal Reviewer | Dr. Laretta Frederking, Vice-Principal and Academic Dean, Brescia University College |
| Date of Site Visit | March 12-13, 2020 |
| Evaluation | Good Quality |
| Approval Dates | SUPR-U: February 24, 2021 SCAPA: March 3, 2021 Senate (for information only): March 12, 2021 |
| Year of Next Review | Year of next cyclical review – 2027-28 |

Overview of Western’s Cyclical Review Assessment Reporting Process

In accordance with Western’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a summary of the cyclical review, internal responses, and assessment and evaluation of the undergraduate modules delivered by the **Department of History, Huron University College.**

This report considers and reports on the following documents: the program’s self-study, the external consultants’ report and the responses from the Department and the Associate Dean of Science.

This Final Assessment Report (FAR):

- i) provides an Executive Summary of the Review Process, including an overview of the Department as outlined in the Self-Study brief;
- ii) identifies the strengths of the program;
- iii) identifies opportunities for program enhancement and improvement; and,
- iv) prioritizes the recommendations of the external consultants in the Implementation Plan.

The Implementation Plan details the recommendations from the Final Assessment Report that are required for implementation, identifies who is responsible for approving and acting on the recommendations, outlines any action or follow-up that is required, and provides the timeline for completion.

The Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan is sent for approval through SUPR-U, SCAPA, Senate and the Ontario Universities’ Council on Quality Assurance and is made available on a publicly accessible location on Western’s IQAP website. The Final Assessment Report with the Implementation Plan is the only document resulting from the undergraduate cyclical review process that is made public; all other documents are confidential to the Program/School/Faculty and SUPR-U.

Executive Summary (as identified in the Self-Study Brief)¹

Overview

Huron University College is one of three University Colleges academically affiliated with The University of Western Ontario. Graduates receive their degrees from Western.

The Department's Learning Outcomes align with Huron's Strategic Plan as well as Western's Degree Learning Outcomes and prioritize research learning, experiential learning, global perspective, and addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call to action. In developing the curriculum, faculty have consulted widely, including the students who recommended more flexibility in the design of the History programs.

With five tenured faculty members in the Department, the faculty is committed to ensuring direct links between the curriculum and the application of the skills and habits of mind developed throughout the program with an eye to

political, social, and intellectual histories, history and memory, race, gender and culture, and combine global perspectives with local, hands-on research opportunities for our students.

Strengths/Innovations of the Program (as identified in the brief)

- Student experiences in archival work, public presentations, field work, and digital history projects
- International student collaboration.
- Experiential learning through community-based research projects
- The Huron Community History Centre
- The letterpress studio
- Student Support Services that include academic advising, student wellness, and international student engagement
- Strong library support
- W Galen Weston Fund for British History

Challenges

- Declining student enrolments

¹ Direct quotes from the review materials are noted in italics; otherwise, all comments are summarized.

Self-Study Process

The self-study of the department was a collective effort involving participation from all members of the Department of History at Huron University College. Multiple faculty meetings were designated for the purposes of reviewing the undergraduate program and resulted in the mapping of the curriculum to the Learning Outcomes as described in the brief.

Data were also gathered from 26 students, 29 alumni, and administrative staff, to ascertain their insights into strength, challenges, and opportunities for future development for the Department.

Review Process²

During the external review, the review committee (comprised of the two external reviewers and one internal reviewer) were provided with Volumes I and II in advance of their visit and then met on the first day with the personnel noted in bold print. The second day of onsite visitation was cancelled due to the closure of the university due to the pandemic. The reviewers met with the remaining people via email over the following weeks.

- John Doerksen, Vice Provost (Academic Programs)
- Karen Campbell, Vice Provost (Academic Planning, Policy and Faculty Relations)
- Barry Craig, President, Huron University College
- Geoff Read, Provost, and Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Science
- Nina Reid-Maroney, Chair and Professor, History
- Faculty, Department of History
- Jennifer Morocco, Registrar
- Melanie Mills, Director, Library and Learning Services
- Rachel Melis, Research & Instructional Services
- Ryan Rabie, Digital Initiatives and User Services Librarian
- Sahana Mazumder, Program Assistant, FASS
- Deanne van Tol, Coordinator, Teaching and Research
- Undergraduate students

The reviewers also engaged in a tour of the campus building, observing the facilities that support teaching, learning, and research on the first day.

² From the external review report: *Please note that this review process was disrupted by the outbreak of the Covid- 19 pandemic in mid-March 2020. We were unable to complete the second day of the scheduled interviews and, instead, solicited email feedback from History Department faculty, students, and support staff, following the weeks of our site visit.*

Following the review, the external reviewers submitted a comprehensive report of their findings which was sent to the Chair and the Dean for review and response. These formative documents, including Volumes I and II of the Self-Study, the External Report, and the Faculty response, have formed the basis of this summative assessment report of the History undergraduate programs.

Summative Assessment – External Reviewers’ Report

The History Department’s self-study demonstrates the extent to which it already meets many of the institutional goals of the College, by developing community partnerships, including hands-on and off-campus research and learning opportunities for students. Courses in the History Department emphasize critical thinking and analysis, and communication skills, which contributes to social justice and ethical goals at Huron.

Strengths of the Program

- Indigenization
- Learning Outcomes
- Innovative and current curriculum content
- Library and Learning Services
- Small class sizes, interactive class formats
- Faculty who are encouraging, approachable and committed to their students
- Experiential learning
- Student satisfaction

Challenges for the Program

- Declining enrolment
- Little interaction with History faculty at Western or other affiliated colleges
- Using digital forms in teaching and content

Summary Statement

The emphasis on small class sizes, interactive class formats and faculty who are encouraging, approachable and committed to their students’ learning is highly appropriate to the content and focus of the Department’s curriculum.

What is so impressive about the History program is the wealth of opportunities it offers students, with relatively few faculty members.

Reviewers’ Key Recommendations and Department/Faculty Responses

The external recommendations focus primarily on issues of declining enrolment and offering suggestions to promote the discipline of History as a focus of study to increase student numbers.

| REVIEWERS’ RECOMMENDATIONS | DEPARTMENT RESPONSE |
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| <i>Clearly communicate to students the value-added components and the reasons why learning to read, write, research, communicate are skills that will carry them through life.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop video messaging such as Fall 2020 video to supplement other ways of communicating these advantages in classes. |
| <i>Increase promotion to students and parents about the documented value of history degree – promote success stories and share stories of where students have gone and what they are doing now. There could be good opportunities to connect undergraduates’ experiential learning with later opportunities that were afforded to them.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New alumni profiles have been identified for website and promotion—department will follow-up with marketing & communications - Update History marketing materials address innovation & success of History grads (for an easy example, highlight # of recent Huron gold medalists from History)— department will follow up with marketing/communications - Enhance department access to data about History alumni...Department will follow up with Advancement. |
| <i>Ensure that students understand that they can take some courses in Western’s History Department and remain Huron students. This might be especially important for students who are interested in earlier historical periods.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection to other History units is already robust through regular consultation on courses and programs with Western/Brescia/King’s colleagues, - Huron is represented on the Western History Undergraduate Committee |
| <i>Ensure that program information is clear and easily accessible. The College website and the History Department pages are attractive and appealing, but it is not particularly easy to locate specific program information.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updates to History pages on the Huron website completed |
| <i>It seems like there is a good opportunity to connect the History Department’s core approach with institutional branding around “Leadership with Heart.”</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department follow-up with FASS Dean, Advancement, and marketing/communications to identify specific areas of innovation and alignment between History programming and Huron’s core messaging to prospective students |
| <i>Ensure that communications staff at Huron highlight the work of history faculty members and their students in college communications.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - follow-up with marketing/communications |
| <i>Increase the opportunities for faculty members and the Department to communicate</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to reach out to students in 1st year first-year registration periods |

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| <p><i>with students who succeed in first-year History courses and encourage them to continue taking History courses.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional in-person outreach through huronresearch.ca/history to highlight opportunities |
| <p><i>Explore ways that the History Department could work with other departments at Huron. Currently there appears to be one History course in the Governance, Leadership and Ethics program. There doesn't appear to be any intersection between History Department and the large Management and Organizational Studies program; perhaps a world history elective could be included in their 'Organizational Studies, Policy and Ethics' module.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify History 1818F/G 1817F/G as logical first-year options for students interested in other Huron programs - Introduce new 2nd-year course on histories of imperialism and global capitalism in the 18th & early 19th centuries - Work with EPC colleagues to identify cross- program alignment and communicate those areas of alignment more effectively to students outside of History programs |

Other Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement

In addition to the recommendations, the reviewers identified many other considerations to enhance or enrich the program.

- *Course scheduling happens separately at all four campuses. We heard that there is interest in coordinating some of these efforts – it could be a way to help boost enrolment in courses if they complement other offerings on the campus. Is there a way to pursue this?*
- *Make sure program offers both thematic and some survey courses.*
- *Faculty or students visits/guest lectures in high schools to showcase interesting elements of Huron's History program.*
- *Find ways to talk to both international students and domestic students with business interests about the value of studying history. Perhaps there is a way to include a global history course as an elective for students in MOS program.*
- *Consider ways to encourage international students to take History. One way might be to have courses specifically designed for international students, e.g. introduction to Canadian history; introduction to indigenous history in Canada.*

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action and/or follow-up. The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty/Affiliated University College Principal will be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan. The details of progress made will be presented in the Deans’ Annual Report and filed in the Office of the Vice-Provost (Academic).

| Recommendation | Proposed Action and Follow-up | Responsibility | Timeline |
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| 1. Identify skills and their added value explicitly throughout the curriculum. | Faculty workshops | Academic Dean | September 2022 |
| 2. Consider all recommendations to increase student enrolment. | Discussion within the department | Chair of the Program; Academic Dean | Ongoing |
| 3. Maintain a good balance of thematic and survey courses. | Strengthen multi-year planning within the department around course offerings | Chair of the Program; Academic Dean | Ongoing |
| 4. Develop courses that respond to and correspond with other programs. | Faculty workshops across programs and campuses | Academic Dean | Ongoing |