

## **2011 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Department of History, Illinois State University**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department of History of Illinois State University is:

- ⊖ to engage in research in the discipline of history and/or in the teaching of history and the social sciences, and to produce nationally/internationally recognized scholarship in those areas;
- ⊖ to serve both the University and the broader community by the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge;
- ⊖ to attract and retain high-quality faculty who are committed to teaching, research, and service as mutually supportive activities;
- ⊖ to teach history at both the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- ⊖ to create and maintain, with our students, a comfortable and challenging teaching-learning community;
- ⊖ to promote student development, encourage shared responsibility for learning and academic achievement;
- ⊖ to prepare future teachers in the discipline of history;
- ⊖ to help currently employed teachers to increase their knowledge of the subject matter and develop their pedagogical skills;
- ⊖ to exercise University citizenship by meaningful faculty and student participation in University governance;
- ⊖ to foster a sense of intellectual community in an environment of mutual respect, collegiality, and professionalism.

In short, through the attraction and retention of high-quality faculty who are committed to teaching, research, and service as mutually supportive activities, the Department of History seeks to provide excellent instruction at the undergraduate and graduate levels, to prepare future teachers in the discipline of history, to produce nationally and internationally recognized scholarship in history and the teaching of history, and to create an academic community committed to the ideals of liberal learning.

#### **Vision**

Consistent with the vision of *Educating Illinois*, the department seeks to be the first choice in Illinois among undergraduate and masters-level students in history who value the individualized attention offered by our commitment to teaching, the benefits of studying under a large and diverse faculty with expertise in a broad range of fields, the significance of the production and dissemination and new knowledge, and civic engagement informed by historical understanding.

## Core Values

The department derives its values from those of Illinois State University, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the history profession as articulated by the American Historical Association (AHA).

With the university and college we share a commitment to: *scholarship* – the active pursuit of learning through research and the dissemination of new knowledge through publication and teaching lies at the heart of the ideal of a university; *teaching* – the development of transferable skills related to research, writing, reading, and critical thinking not only prepares our students for responsible citizenship, it also renders them qualified for a wide variety of careers in an increasingly diverse and fast-changing global society; *citizenship* – faculty, staff, and students should participate in departmental, institutional, professional, local, national, and global communities as expressions of their adherence to shared and democratic governance, empathetic civic engagement derived from historical understanding, and belief in the value of toleration and divergent views.

In its understanding of research and teaching the department follows the AHA, which treats history as both a systematic process of analyzing evidence and a way of thinking about the world. Specifically, in our scholarship we affirm the integrity of primary and secondary sources while subjecting them to critical scrutiny and engaging in a fair minded debate concerning what those sources tell us about the past. Thus, historians are obligated to document their sources, acknowledge intellectual debts to other scholars, and respect divergent interpretations as they struggle to understand the meaning of the past. Our teaching is guided by a belief that history is essential to liberal education, which cultivates informed judgments based on respect for verifiable evidence and sensitivity to cultural and geographical differences, thereby equipping students to: participate knowledgeable in world affairs; understand themselves and their societies as products of historical developments and thus gain a sense of informed perspective and a mature view of human nature; appreciate the source of the values and institutions of their society while exhibiting awareness of the fully human values of other cultures; read and think critically, write and speak clearly, and conduct research effectively.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS**

**Goal #1: Strengthen the Undergraduate Program, Guided by Principles and Practices Established by the AHA's *Liberal Learning and the History Major***

**Goal #2: Maintain Our Role as a State and National Leader in History-Social Sciences Education, Guided by the AHA's *The Next Generation of History Teachers: A Challenge to Departments of History at American Colleges and Universities***

**Goal #3: Enhance the Quality of the Department's M.A./M.S. Program Serving Different Constituencies**

**Goal #4: Recruit and Retain High-Quality Faculty, Provide Members with Adequate Resources to Support Their Professional Development, and Promote a Sense of Intellectual Community to which They Will Contribute**

**Goal #5: Increase Outreach to Alumni, the Community, and Former Faculty and Staff**

## **STRATEGIC ACTIONS**

### **I. Overall Program**

- a. Promote the Liberal Arts, emphasizing History's role in them, stressing to students the value of their transferable skills, advocating for them among the administration, and fostering them through links to other departments.
- b. Maintain and expand our commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration through participation in minors, the pursuit of additional minors such as American Studies, Religious Studies and/or European Studies, the encouragement of team-teaching and faculty "loans" across departments, and the exploration of opportunities for joint appointments.
- c. Monitor enrollment and gauge the necessity of enrollment management.
- d. Determine the department's proper role in the general education program.
- e. Determine the place of online courses in the department's curriculum, as urged by the university's task force on distance education.
- f. Perform program reviews for Fall 2014.
- g. Redesign departmental website so that all student and faculty information and forms are available online.

### **II. Undergraduate Program**

- a. Promote the idea of "Beyond Schroeder Hall" (i.e. a meaningful extracurricular experience related to internships, study abroad, student teaching, volunteer work, or service learning).
- b. Engage in a "What Can I Do with My History Major?" campaign.
- c. Replenish advising ranks to serve approximately 600 majors/minors.
- d. Expand the department's internship program.
- e. Promote faculty and student participation in study abroad.
- f. Explore ways to integrate public history into the curriculum.

- g. Recruit students in, and highlight the visibility of, our Honors Program, and revise program guidelines to conform to University Honors.
- h. Complete guideline revisions for His 200 and His 300, encourage greater faculty participation in these courses, and hold an annual “best practices” discussion.
- i. Launch a departmental writing initiative.
- j. Issue guidelines for the amount of reading and writing and the level of specificity for 100, 200, 300 level courses; have the curriculum committee monitor departmental course offerings.
- k. Review curriculum for deletion of old courses and for identification of thematic, geographical, and/or chronological lacunae.
- l. Through recruitment of new faculty and encouragement of existing faculty, expand course offerings to reflect trends in the discipline and to cover new fields.
- m. Work with Admissions to engage in recruitment efforts aimed at increasing the diversity and excellence of students admitted to our program.
- n. Foster curricular and pedagogical innovation, e.g. by initiating in Spring 2012 the team-taught course in the History of the Atlantic World.
- o. Explore possibility of first year experience program / History 100.

### **III. Teacher Education Program**

- a. Monitor impact of new GPA requirements and the economy on number of students; explore necessity or desirability of enrollment management.
- b. Review the curriculum and programming of the 290/390 sequence.
- c. Integrate all faculty members in the process of teacher preparation.
- d. Explore the advisability of world history in order to prepare future teachers.
- e. Invite history teachers from local schools to participate in departmental colloquia and events as colleagues.
- f. Monitor, and possibly expand, the collaborative student teaching model.
- g. Seek and write grant opportunities related to history education and civic engagement.
- h. Plan for the retirement of Fred Walk as supervisor of student teaching.

### **IV. Graduate Program**

- a. Review and after two years do a systematic assessment of the recent, major changes to the graduate program.
- b. Enhance the quality of our program through the targeted recruitment of excellent students from ISU and proximate universities and the advertising of faculty specialties.
- c. Promote graduate student research through encouragement of the thesis option, participation in ISU’s graduate research colloquium, Phi Alpha Theta, and the Eastern/ISU/Indiana State consortium.
- d. Encourage rotation of and broad faculty participation in History 496 and 497.
- e. Review at two year intervals and, if appropriate, refine the existing system of direct assessment of the graduate program; incorporate indirect assessment procedure for graduate students upon exiting the program.
- f. Hold an annual workshop for students wishing to apply to PhD programs.

- g. Review our commitment to serving Chicago area teachers by offering an annual graduate seminar at Lincoln Way East High School.
- h. Encourage students to take advantage of Newberry Library relationship/funds.

## **V. Faculty Recruitment and Professional Development**

- a. Enhance research support for faculty with additional travel money (when available), a commitment to support sabbatical leaves, a pre-tenure course release program, and creative teaching assignments that promote efficiency.
- b. Encourage, reward, and publicize research productivity, the pursuit of external funding, and teaching excellence.
- c. Encourage, and reward according to AHA standards, faculty participation in public history projects.
- d. Replenish faculty lines through the hiring of historians of medieval Europe and China.
- e. Promote team-taught courses within the discipline and across disciplines.
- f. Ensure an equitable teaching load in balance with scholarly and service expectations.
- g. Revise our ASPT document in accordance with: 1) changes recently passed by the Senate; 2) changes to the department's post-tenure review policy approved by the faculty in fall 2010.
- h. Consider adoption of a clause in the ASPT document mission statement that confirms a commitment to fostering a sense of intellectual community, respectfulness toward colleagues and students, and an environment of collegiality and professionalism.
- i. Develop guidelines for which the designations "satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory" apply in the three categories of teaching, scholarship, and service.
- j. Review the department's raise allocation formula to determine if recommendations for change are warranted.
- k. Review, revise, and/or re-distribute the department's procedures for faculty searches.
- l. Mentor pre-tenure faculty and make a priority the professional development of the department's thirteen associate professors.
- m. Devise a plan for equitable rotation of service responsibilities, and encourage faculty to represent the department in the college, university, and profession.

## **VI. Intellectual Programming**

- a. Maintain department research seminar and encourage faculty and students to participate in this and other events that contribute to the intellectual life of the department and institution.
- b. Foster an intellectual community through continued leadership in recruiting speakers for the International Studies Series, the Women's and Gender Studies Symposium, and Black History Month.
- c. Encourage participation by faculty and students in Interdisciplinary Studies programs such as African Studies, African-American Studies, Ethnic

Studies, Native American Studies, Latin American Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, Urban Studies, and Middle East and South Asian Studies.

- d. Continue sponsorship of the Bone Lecture with Politics and Government and Sociology/Anthropology.

## **VII. Outreach**

- a. Redesign the department website to communicate with external parties and disseminate news of faculty, staff, and student accomplishments; determine the appropriate role of social media in such communication.
- b. Host graduation ceremony for graduating students and their families.
- c. Create online editions of the departmental newsletter and journal of student papers.
- d. Host homecoming event and continue to invite alumni for Distinguished Alumni Day.
- e. Explore the desirability of an Alumni Advisory Board.
- f. Initiate an "Annual \$10" campaign for more recent (and employed!) alumni.
- g. Spotlight successful alumni on the department website, invite them to department for a Careers in History event.
- h. Encourage everyone in the department to establish and maintain personal contact with former students, faculty, and staff.