

Indiana State University

2004 - 2005 Academic Annual Report

Department of History

Year in Review

Accomplishments

As you have heard, increasing public awareness of Indiana State University's accomplishments is crucial to building student enrollment, influencing policy makers, and developing a place of pre-eminence in the Midwest. What do you consider to be your department's 5-10 top accomplishments for the 2004-2005 year that will help contribute to this effort?

We have established an internship course for history majors, which will be offered for the first time in the fall, 2005. This will take students into the community to work in museums and archives. We ran a pilot program in our History and Historians course (HIST 300) that used students to conduct oral history interviews with local residents. This engaged students in the wider Wabash Valley community, while introducing them to archival research methods. We continued to produce nationally recognized scholarship in the form of peer-reviewed articles in first tier journals, peer-reviewed monographs with outstanding presses, and conference papers delivered at major organizational meetings. A sample from this year include books with the Univ. of Georgia and Univ. of Alabama Presses, articles in Middle Eastern Studies, and conference papers at the Organization of American Historians, American Historical Association, and Southern Historical Association. We have continued to increase our number of majors, which this year topped 80 for the first time. We maintained one of the University's highest SCH averages. In Fall 2004 (according to OSPIRE data) the history department ranked 4th across the University for SCH generated. Several faculty members were active in Project PRE, serving as task force members and as PDS Liaisons. New courses created, including: HIST 610: Preparing for College Teaching; HIST 404/504: Internships in Public History. These and many other achievements are detailed in our department's program review self-study and in faculty FARs.

Research and Scholarship

What is your assessment of accomplishments in the area of research and scholarship? Are you satisfied overall? In which areas do you feel your department does particularly well? In which areas do you feel your department needs to improve?

Our faculty continue to be very active in the area of research and scholarship. This year we had three new monographs published, by Professors Shoemaker, Hawkins, and Chirhart. They appeared with the ABC-CLIO Press, the University of Alabama Press, and the University of Georgia Press, three nationally recognized and peer-reviewed presses. In addition to these books the faculty had several peer-reviewed articles published and accepted, and delivered numerous conference papers. We continue to maintain one of the highest tenure standards in the University.

Grants, Contracts & Off Campus Professional Service

What is your assessment of accomplishments in the area of grants, contracts, and off campus professional service? Are you satisfied overall? In which areas do you feel your department does particularly well? In which areas do you feel your department needs to improve?

The department received five internal grants this year: University Research Council (Prof. Foster); two IT Liberal Learning in Action (Profs. Olsen and Foster); Focus Indiana (Prof. Olsen); and

Instructional and Research Technology Services grant (Prof. Phillips). All faculty members are active in regional and national organizations within our profession, serving as manuscript reviewers, on organization committees, and as grant and award committee members, among many other activities.

Best Practices

Describe the progress your unit has made thus far. Were you able to take these steps? What steps or goals have been particularly difficult to achieve and why? What practices, actions, initiatives are you doing that could be considered eminent?

We created an internship course for history majors and experimented with oral history in our History and Historians class (that will be continued in fall, 2005). We are working to create an interdisciplinary oral history center at ISU. Several faculty are developing team-taught, interdisciplinary courses for next year and beyond. We are developing a CAPSTONE course.

Student Credit Hours

What did you learn? What steps will you take during 2004-05 to meet your department's student credit hour target by fall 2005?

By offering some courses at night and by teaching some large sections of the survey the department met its SCH target in Fall 2004, although we fell just short in Spring 2005. The primary reason for this shortfall is that we offer so many general education courses that students schedule when they first arrive at ISU. Thus, by the spring semester we always see a slight decline in our overall enrollments. The changes from the Gen. Ed. 2000 program have also affected our survey-level enrollments, and the revisions made the Social Studies Education program, resulting in a reduced number of required hours in history, are also affecting our upper-level classes. These changes, however, largely has been balanced by a large increase in the number of our majors, partly the result of efforts at recruiting. We plan to develop more topical survey courses (along the lines of Professor Layton's very popular World War II course) that will help students satisfy their general education requirement. In Fall, 2004 the history department ranked 4th in the University in SCH generated.

Budget

Identify and describe any collaborative efforts that have been undertaken by your department with other academic or administrative units to maximize resources to meet departmental goals. Please also consider collaborative opportunities with external partners.

We worked with several departments to help provide funding for external speakers.

Outreach

What are the outreach opportunities for your discipline? (non-traditional modes of delivery and timing, etc)

The department provides qualified faculty to teach in the Corrections Program. This fall (2005) we will be offering our first web-based general education history course (HIST 202).

Assessment

For each program in the department, provide one or two examples of how the program is using assessment and evaluation (student outcomes, program review, and/or accreditation) to enhance student learning and program strength this year.

Our undergraduate program is (and continues to be in the process of) using our outcomes based

assessment to update and improve our department. Specifically, over the past 2 academic years, the department has undergone the complex process of creating the a historical internship course, history 4/504, and setting up internship opportunities. The course will be offered for the first time in Fall 2005. Numerous exit interviews have indicated a desire for internships, and the development of the program is partially in response to this part of the assessment program. Exit interviews have also indicated a need for additional career guidance, which we have been attempting to integrate into our advising agenda. This year, the program underwent an extensive outside review. Student assessment information formed one important part of that review. Since the review process will not be completed until May 6, we are still in the process of fully digesting and deciding how to effectively utilize the feedback from that review. Our primary focus this year in using assessment and evaluation to enhance student learning and program strength has been through an intensive hiring process and increase in course offerings. Specifically, exit interviews, assessment of student portfolios, and our program review indicated weaknesses in providing adequate offerings in European history. We hired three European historians this year to meet these needs. We also offered courses in response to student demand and perceived departmental weaknesses, such as Medieval European History, American Intellectual History, and offering Modern Japanese History as a 400 level (instead of 300 level) course. In order to address weaknesses in some student writing and research, an increased emphasis has been placed on advising students to take History 300 before taking (or when first taking) 400 level courses. This advice is partially based on our reading of student portfolios, which indicates that students who took History 300 relatively early in their academic careers performed better, and showed greater improvement over their undergraduate careers, than students who delayed in taking this course.

Strategic Initiatives

Development Activities

What steps have you taken to support development activities in your department? How can your efforts be supported?

We support professional development for faculty members through financial support for travel to conferences and for research. These are the most important ways in which our faculty continue to represent ISU. These efforts lead directly to scholarly publications that enhance the reputation of the department and the University. The most important way the University supports our faculty efforts is through continued, and increased, funds for professional travel and sabbaticals.

Experiential Learning

Please provide examples of experiential learning in which your department was engaged in 2004-2005.

Research in archives. Oral history interviews.

Future Goals

Future Goals

The University is highlighting experiential learning, community engagement, and eminent programs as aspects of our campus that will attract students and resources. How is your department planning to contribute to these strategic initiatives in ways that will help ISU be recognized as a Pre-eminent University?

The department faculty continues to produce nationally recognized scholarship, adding to the University's profile in the region. In the past year we have initiated two significant experiential learning and community engagement projects. First, we are working to establish an Oral History

Center for the Wabash Valley. This would bring together faculty members from across the University, many of whom are already working on oral history or folklore projects. Oral history is one of the best ways to get students involved in the community, working with faculty to produce scholarship that can be presented at conferences or published. Second, we created an internship class for history majors that will allow qualified students to work in museums and archives. It will be offered for the first time in the fall, 2005 semester.