

# Department of History Strategic Goals

**2019**

**Preamble:** As a community of scholars, we recognize the importance of deep primary and secondary source research as a means of understanding both the past and the present, the local and the global. As a community of committed teachers, we aspire to cultivate historical thinking, including the understanding of context, causality, contingency, complexity and change over time in a way that engages and inspires our students. As a community of faculty, staff, and students we commit to creating a respectful and inclusive working and learning environment.

Our objectives include but are not limited to:

## **Goal 1: Research Excellence and Impact**

To continue to be recognized for the outstanding quality of our research. To achieve this we will:

- ▶ Seek out research excellence in hiring new colleagues;
- ▶ Expand our department's research expertise to include more regions of the globe outside our current strengths in North America and Europe;
- ▶ Identify and build thematic clusters that allow collaboration in the department and strengthen shared research and the graduate program;
- ▶ Promote interdisciplinary collaboration and facilitate engagement with other units to enrich research activities across campus;
- ▶ Mentor and support colleagues' research grant applications;
- ▶ Celebrate research success in the department;
- ▶ Support opportunities for faculty research fellowships;
- ▶ Continue to recognize monographs and academic articles as vital means of communicating research while embracing newer forms of scholarly communication;
- ▶ Protect time and space for research; and
- ▶ Support the ongoing connections of Emeritus and Adjunct Faculty to the Department.

## **Goal 2: Foster an extraordinary academic and learning environment.**

To maintain and foster in new ways a vibrant and collegial departmental environment conducive to innovation, productivity, and quality in teaching and to offer our undergraduate and graduate students a challenging, inspiring, and skills-based grounding in historical and critical thinking in a supportive environment that prepares them for post-degree training/careers and provides the tools for critically-minded citizenship. To achieve these goals we will:

- ▶ Ensure our pedagogy and curriculum is responsive to the experiences and aspirations of our students and the challenges they face in a changing world and thereby strengthen both the quality of our program and our enrollments;
- ▶ Expand our department's teaching expertise to include more regions of the globe beyond our current strengths in North America and Europe;
- ▶ Ensure that there are courses that give students the tools to understand issues that have created social and environmental instability in the past and present;
- ▶ Seek new opportunities to increase enrollments and improve student retention;



- ▶ Offer a variety of teaching formats including large lecture classes, mixed lecture-seminar classes, seminars, workshops, and field schools;
- ▶ Ensure that all majors and honours students have an experience in a seminar setting and are supported in refining their written and oral communication skills;
- ▶ Ensure that teaching loads do not exceed the capacity of instructors to offer our majors students opportunities to improve their writing and research skills and to be able to set exams that allow students to demonstrate their grasp of complexity in history;
- ▶ In our learning outcomes and syllabi, promote critical thinking skills, applied communication skills and an understanding of historical perspectives and methodologies;



- ▶ Encourage our students to seize international study opportunities;
- ▶ Make team teaching an attractive and viable option within and beyond the department;
- ▶ Collaborate and participate in Faculty-wide initiatives to demonstrate the value and values of the Humanities to the university and other audiences;



- ▶ Integrate our research into our teaching and Integrate undergraduate and graduate students into research projects;
- ▶ Build experiential learning opportunities into our curricula;
- ▶ Support a transition to post-university life through promoting Coop and related opportunities;
- ▶ Ensure our graduating students are aware of the abilities and knowledge they have gained or enhanced in their degree -- including the analytical, research, communication, critical thinking and leadership skills -- that they can apply in any career.

### **Goal 3: Impact Beyond the Academy**

To continue to be recognized as a leader in promoting the understanding of the importance of history through our public engagement, institutional and community partnerships, and community-based teaching and learning. To achieve this we will:

- ▶ Be open to new and diverse avenues for disseminating our knowledge;
- ▶ Participate in and promote opportunities such as Café Historique, Speaker's Bureau, Ideafest or similar public events for the sharing of departmental knowledge;
- ▶ Ensure that tenure and promotion and merit reviews acknowledge the diverse forms of dissemination and impact, including public dissemination;
- ▶ Build on existing connections with the community organizations to encourage community-based learning and Co-op learning opportunities.
- ▶ Ensure that our graduating students have the self-knowledge and confidence in their skills to be ambassadors for the Humanities to the wider community;
- ▶ Encourage our alumni to feel connected to and support the department.

### **Goal 4: Foster and Reflect Diversity, Respect, Reconciliation, and Critically Engaged Citizenship**

To build a sustainable, respectful community that promotes respect for the full range of human diversity and reflects the university's commitment to equity and in particular to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's goals to support the success of Indigenous students and raise awareness of the history of colonialism, locally and globally. To achieve this we will:

- ▶ Ensure that the Department is a welcoming learning and work environment through:
  - ▶ an active Equity Committee
  - ▶ organizing or supporting workshops that promote these values;
- ▶ Ensure that we offer courses that promote respectful learning environments;
- ▶ Sponsor community forums and educational opportunities such as the "Colonial Realities Tour";
- ▶ Support departmental staff with opportunities for professional development and growth; and
- ▶ Seek opportunities to improve the working conditions of our sessional instructors and integrate them into our department community.

Adopted March 19, 2019.