Department Annual Report

Non-Perkins Programs

2013-2014

Social Sciences

Document Prepared By:

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Department Information

Current year goals
Our goals included some ambitious undertakings:
--Provide at least two nights of Adjunct Professional Development and Departmental Conversations
--Create a Student Advising Plan for 2014/15 that improved on this past year
--Conduct another Race, Ethnicity and Identity Conference
--Increase the scope and coverage of our website
--Collect and prepare a presentation for the Race Card activity from REI
--Create common syllabus templates for Economics and Political Science
--Continue collaborations with World Affairs Council, Model UN, Study Away, GTU, and Great Decisions Speakers Series
--Discuss and create expectations for uniform textbook selection for adjuncts in Political Science and Economics by end of 2014.
--Complete training for observations (all FT Faculty will participate)
-- Program Review work for Economics, Geography, Sociology, and Anthropology
--Provide a Professional Development opportunity and partner with other departments

Goals for next year
--Continue work on common syllabus, uniform textbooks, and all external and internal collaborations started in the past.
--Finish updating all outstanding CARPS
--Begin Program Review for History and Political Science
--Reassess the REI conference (make this a bi-annual project) against an ILO (as we have done in the past)
--Collaborate and partner with the Diversity Lecture Series on REI keynote and incorporate the event in Social Sciences curriculum
--Improve our Student Advising Plan
--Provide at least two Professional Development Opportunities
--Increase our College service collectively (FT Faculty)

Internal collaborations and partnerships
--Diversity Lecture Series (ongoing and in early stages)
--100 Year Planning Team
--AGC, SLT, IIPD, Faculty Association, CTE, AGC Executive Committee, Sabbatical Committee, and others.
--Our faculty remain some of the most engaged on campus. We have a presence on nearly every major committee and we have a plan to try and increase that scope in 2014/2015 with members on the Provost Search Committee and Diversity Center

External collaborations and partnerships
--Model UN
--World Affair’s Council of West Michigan
-- GTU International Honors Society

Departmental needs for support from other departments within the college

-- The decision to cut the funding for REI has cast a shadow on what we do. We do have promises that funding will be available again this year from the Dean. But, we now face a year to year process of securing funds for this event which has become a central part of our outreach, our professional development and our college service. I would like to seek a way to provide more stability for this event. That will help with both the planning and the promotion of this important academic event.

Program accreditation Updates
None

Description of departmental advising plan and outcomes
Our current advising plan was on an as needed basis. The invitation to connect with faculty members was on our Webpage (http://cms.grcc.edu/social-sciences/student-advising) and the homepage included descriptions of each discipline within the department and career opportunities in each field. A sample from History follows:

“When the past no longer illuminates the future, the spirit walks in darkness.”
- Alexis de Tocqueville

What is history and why should I study it?

The purpose of studying history is to better understand the complex cultures as well as the historical systems and events that have driven the past, produced the present, and guide the future of our world. This crucial discipline reveals human connections across time and place; it teaches us about past human experiences and their influence upon our present lives.

Historians no longer see their discipline as a parade of powerful men and lists of dates. Instead, we critically analyze evidence about all people living in the past to create an inclusive narrative of past human experiences and an understanding of issues that impact the modern world.

So while history is the study of the past, it is simultaneously a tool used to understand the present. It encompasses every dimension of human interaction, including social life, economics, gender, culture, philosophy, conflict, and politics. Students of history study individuals, communities, and nations from every conceivable perspective, and they employ all the techniques of the humanities and social sciences to raise important questions and probe for answers about how our world has developed over time.
In particular, this discipline is about analyzing evidence in order to better understand the causation and significance of historical phenomena. In this way, history leads us to better understand the complexities and problems of our modern world. Only after we understand the historical causation of a problem can we hope to solve it effectively. As Herbert Hoover once stated most eloquently, “The supreme purpose of history is a better world.”

No other discipline better prepares students to deal with and understand our contemporary world than does the discipline of history. In the process of carrying out this crucial field of study, students trained in history develop the critical skills of research and analysis, creative methods for recognizing patterns in information, and techniques for effective and persuasive writing. This combined skillset will enhance students’ marketability and success in any professional career.

What history courses are offered at GRCC?

GRCC offers a number of survey courses on World history, European history, Latin American history, and United States history, as well as numerous specialized upper-level courses such as African-American history, Gender and Sexuality, Immigration and Ethnicity, local history, and many others. Students may also choose to pursue individualized history research projects through independent study courses or participate in a study abroad program, such as our well-known Irish Foreign Studies Program.

Our courses are open not only to history majors and minors but to the college community as a whole. Most courses have no prerequisites, although some 200-level courses may have restrictions based on the need for the completion of other courses beforehand. For more information on specific courses, please see the college’s course catalogue.

Who teaches history at GRCC?

All history classes at GRCC are taught by highly trained fulltime and adjunct faculty members who specialize in a wide array of periods, places, and approaches to history. We pride ourselves on being an excellent teaching department. We converse frequently among ourselves about pedagogy (the science of teaching), stay apprised of the cutting-edge of scholarship in our fields, and work to incorporate the latest scholarship and the best teaching techniques into all of our courses. Our consistently positive student evaluations reflect our enthusiasm and our dedication to teaching.

In addition, our historians are also experienced, professional scholars with many honors and credits to their names, and who are continuously engaged in an enormous range of activities involving research, publishing, presentation, community outreach, and service to the college and
the wider academic community. All these activities inform our teaching and ensure the highest quality educational experiences for our students.

What careers are possible with a history degree?

The study of history opens a wide variety of careers to students and gives them the knowledge and skills to succeed in fields ranging from education, law, government, business, the non-profit sector, the arts, and many other fields. Students wishing to know more about the career opportunities afforded by a history major are encouraged to visit the American Historical Association’s “Careers for History Majors” website.

Whom may I meet with for more information?

Those who would like more detail on the discipline of history, GRCC’s specific history classes, or any other related issue are encouraged to contact one of three full-time faculty members, each representing a different subfield.

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Susan Williams
Professor of European History
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At our year end department meeting it was decided that this approach was a failure in almost every respect. The website presence will not change, but we will be more proactive in serving student advising needs in the future. 2013/2014 will included two advising events and face to face meeting times for interested students. We conducted a more focused and targeted campaign to promote student attendance using Blackboard and emails to students in our classes. We also created fliers to promote the event. This coming year, we plan to coordinate with other departments to further enhance this effort.

Faculty & Staff

Departmental Professional Development Activities (Contractual Obligations for Departmental Faculty Development/6 hours)

Please refer to FPE reports for this information

Faculty Professional Development Activities- Year End Summary
See FPE Reports for individual faculty activities...

The Department collaborated on another successful REI conference. This conference is a major undertaking and it requires the presence and participation of every FT faculty member. We also participated in the collection of over 2000 Race Cards in conjunction with the REI keynote by Michele Norris. These are currently being sorted through to create a snapshot of Race at GRCC exhibit for White Hall and Sneden. We are also looking into creating a video about the experience.
EOL/Release Time Work

Lisa Gloege (Faculty Professional Development) DLIT
Mike Light (AGC Executive Committee – ending in Summer 2014)
Steve Abid (Faculty Professional Development) New Faculty Institute

Faculty & Staff Accomplishments/Awards
See FPE reports

Faculty & Staff Community Service
See FPE reports

Curriculum

Course Document (CARP) Updates completed this year
All courses in Political Science, Economics, Anthropology, Archeology and Sociology were updated this year as part of Program Review. History, Geography and Gender Studies are being updated next year. This work should be completed by Fall of 2015. No new courses were created this past year.

New Courses/Course Improvement Projects

Please see the Program Review materials

Assessment of Student Learning
Please answer the questions below for each assessment project that you are working on this year. If you have more than one project, simply cut and paste the headers for each section below, in order to create a report for each.

Please see the Program Review materials