

# Periodic Review of the Department of History, University of Washington

April 29, 2025

**Angela Dillard**, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Richard A. Meisler  
Collegiate Professor of Afroamerican & African Studies and History, University of  
Michigan

**Dian Million**, Associate Professor, UW Department of American Indian Studies

**Katherine Stovel**, Professor Emerita, UW Department of Sociology (Committee Chair)

**Peter B. Zinoman**, Professor of History and Southeast Asian Studies, Department of  
History, University of California, Berkeley

# Executive Summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the External Review Committee on the Department of History at the University of Washington (UW). The committee's evaluation is based on a review of the department's self-study as well as on a wide range of interviews with UW administrators, faculty, staff, and students carried out over a two day campus visit.

**Strengths:** The department's scholarly reputation is excellent, with particular strength in Asian, European, American, and World History. It is also recognized as a leader in comparative and transnational research, and its faculty have produced significant publications, won major awards, and contributed to public scholarship.

The department's remarkably healthy culture is one of its greatest assets, forged in part by a long history of effective and caring leadership that prioritized fairness and the common good. The active and well established Diversity Committee, which includes faculty, staff, and graduate students, plays a central role in advancing practices that ensure all members of the community can thrive..

Other strengths and resources include a deep commitment to outstanding teaching, superb undergraduate advising, substantial revenue from endowments, and strong partnerships with other units on campus including the Jackson School of International Studies and the Simpson Center for the Humanities.

**Challenges and Areas for Improvement:** The department faces significant challenges largely associated with shrinkage and new technologies. These trends threaten all aspects of the department's activities, and create palpable anxiety about the long-term future of higher education, particularly among staff, graduate students and assistant professors. Other challenges are more local, including re-imagining departmental communities in the wake of covid and geographic dispersal.

**Summary:** Based on our review of all available evidence, we judge the History Department to be an effective, productive, well-run, and deservedly distinguished academic unit. While it is dealing with a menu of problems and new realities that threaten to weaken the humanities and social sciences at both the state and the national level, the leadership is well aware of these challenges and, in our view, is prudently exploring options to actively address them. Given its myriad strengths including its talented senior leadership, we recommend the next external assessment be conducted at the normal ten-year interval.

# Overview

Like many strong academic departments, the Department of History at the University of Washington faces a critical juncture: how shall it maintain its historical strengths while responding to shifting academic, demographic, and institutional realities? This report, based on the department's comprehensive self-study and a two-day site visit, provides an external assessment of the overall health of the University of Washington's History Department and offers some advice as to how this high quality department might approach challenges that lie on the horizon. In producing this report, we have kept in mind two sets of questions posed to us at the beginning of the process:

## Questions from the Graduate School:

- Are the unit's degree programs of high quality? Do they meet the university's expectations of quality and reputation?
- How does the unit compare with that of peer and aspirational institutions in terms of educational programs and scholarship?
- How can the unit improve the quality of its educational programs and scholarship?
- What does the unit need to do to increase its regional and national prominence?
- Do students, faculty and staff find the unit a supportive and welcoming environment in which to pursue their degrees and careers as scholars, teachers, and administrators?
- Are students, faculty and staff from groups that are underrepresented fully included in the intellectual life of the unit?
- To what extent do the unit's current facilities and building space meet its needs?
- To what extent is the unit preparing students at all levels for careers and future academic pursuits?

## Questions from the Department

- What strengths should the Department build on when opportunity arises?
- How do we sustain teaching excellence in a context of diminishing resources?
- Are there strategies that History could adopt to prepare students for non-academic careers?
- Does the curriculum represent faculty strengths in comparative and cross-regional thematic areas?

After conducting this review, the committee unanimously recommends continuing the status of each program in the UW Department of History, and conducting another review in ten years.

# Overview of Department Strengths

## **Department Culture, Leadership, and Inclusivity**

One of History's best qualities (and one of its greatest assets in overcoming the challenges it faces) is its remarkably healthy departmental culture. In a recent hiring plan, the department asserted that, "Research excellence, teaching innovation, and public-facing history all are vital to our mission, and a spirit of inclusion and a respect for difference animates all that we do." (2023 Hiring plan, p.1). We were repeatedly struck by the ways in which this vision of the department was evident to us during our site visit. Members of the department from virtually every quarter (faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and staff) praise it as a great place to work, marked by a collegial sensibility, respectful meetings, and an absence of partisan factions. A concern for fairness and the common good is evident in departmental policies ranging from teaching assignments to the allocation of endowed professorships. The committee was especially impressed by the good morale of graduate students (often a disgruntled community) and by the devotion of the talented staff to the department's mission and wellbeing.

The committee credits the senior historians and department leadership with nurturing this positive culture. The department chairs interviewed by the committee came across as sensible, sensitive, and civic-minded and as excellent stewards of the department during difficult times. Moreover, essential service and administrative work at all ranks (as appropriate) is viewed as a shared responsibility among the faculty.

In attention to its leadership, a well-established Diversity Committee deserves some credit for maintaining the strong departmental culture. Active since 2007 and including representatives from the faculty, staff, and graduate student population, this committee views its mission as helping a diverse community of people live and thrive together. Current activities include organizing surveys, workshops and listening sessions to take the temperature of stake-holders in History and to make recommendations regarding changing standards and norms. The Diversity Committee addresses concerns of the large number of international faculty and grad students helping with visa issues and easing the on-boarding process for non-American faculty. It also addresses work-life balance problems for new faculty and tries to mitigate the anxiety and insecurity of graduate student life.

## **Teaching quality and bespoke advising**

The department is rightly proud of its commitment to excellence and innovation in teaching. Historians have won numerous university-level teaching awards, and undergraduate students clearly love many of their classes. Faculty are encouraged to

teach both area/period specific courses as well as thematic and or comparative courses, and many of these more topical classes enroll undergraduates who are not History majors. Complementing the dynamic teaching is a “high-touch” approach to undergraduate advising, which contributes to students’ deep affection to the department.

### **Large endowments to fund activities**

The UW History department benefits greatly from the generosity of alums and benefactors. Compared with many other History departments and most other units in the Division of Social Sciences, the UW history department enjoys substantial endowment revenue (currently approximately \$1.5M per annum). Roughly one-third of this revenue targets undergraduate students, with the remaining funding professorships, graduate student fellowships, and the CSPN. Especially given the University’s budget constraints, these funds are essential for supporting faculty research and travel, and allow the department to graduate students relief from working as Teaching Assistants.

## **Overview of Challenges Facing the Department**

### **Managing Shrinkage and Change**

Perhaps the most pressing change the department faces is the difficult task of managing contraction in faculty and graduate student numbers, as well as modest declines in undergraduate enrollments. As the department itself notes, the loss of positions over the past decade, coupled with anticipated retirements, raises pressing questions about how to preserve undergraduate teaching quality and maintain curricular breadth. We observed palpable anxiety about the downstream effects of staffing cuts, online teaching, and risk-averse decision-making. As one faculty member observed, “The risk is that we see change as a threat as opposed to an opportunity.”

### **Intellectual Community & Engagement**

While the department’s culture is collegial, there are concerns about intellectual engagement. Attendance at faculty colloquia and the department’s graduation celebration is reportedly low, and questions persist about the extent to which faculty read each other’s work in preparation for seminars. Geographic and economic pressures—especially for junior faculty—compound these challenges, as does the ongoing stress of living and working in an expensive city.

### **Graduate and Undergraduate Programs**

In some respects the graduate program is undergoing a “seismic shift,” with smaller cohorts and uneven seminar offerings across fields. While the current funding model

and individualized approach to training is appreciated by students, some faculty—especially in smaller fields—express concern about the loss of rigorous field training and seminar culture. Undergraduate enrollments, after a brief uptick, are again in decline, a problem that is exacerbated by classroom shortages and limited TA resources. With a few notable exceptions the department has not embraced online teaching in spite of evidence that many students prefer to take some of their courses remotely.

### **Faculty Experience and Mentorship**

While assistant professors feel relatively well-supported and appreciated within the department, they also report stress and uncertainty about job security, workload, and the future of their fields. The lack of formal mentorship and onboarding for junior faculty has led to some confusion about departmental processes and uneven access to resources. On the one hand there are certainly informal mentoring opportunities, including substantive discussions about pedagogy. On the other hand, senior faculty are perceived as less present, deepening the divide between ranks and contributing to a sense of isolation among newer hires.

The department also faces an important decision about the role of its teaching faculty. Currently they have a group of highly dedicated temporary lecturers who do a fair bit of heavy lifting in the undergraduate curriculum. Figuring out how to recognize and regularize these contributions –and thereby better integrate these faculty into the department –could help stabilize the undergraduate curriculum and would improve these colleagues’ experience.

### **Staff and Administrative Support**

The department’s staff is deeply invested in its mission, but express well-founded fears about the impact of further downsizing on their ability to maintain high-quality operations. Staff also note the burden of extra-departmental responsibilities and the challenges of navigating campus bureaucracy.

## **Specific Elements of the Department**

### **Faculty**

The UW History Department is recognized nationally as an academic unit that produces a huge amount of high-quality, impactful research. The faculty’s scholarly interests span the globe and the ages, with long-term strengths in European, American and World

History. The Asian subfields are especially renowned, including Chinese history (modern, imperial, pre-imperial), Japanese history, South Asian History, and Southeast Asian history. Unlike many History Departments at large public universities, the department is not dominated, either intellectually or numerically, by Americanists and Europeanists - though they have many highly regarded faculty working in these fields. More recently, many faculty members bridge fields and break down silos. The department is a pioneer in the development of comparative and transnational historical research, and it exhibits a growing thematic orientation (e.g., comparative colonialism, communism, environmental history, gender, race, refugee studies, medicine, and labor history). The fact that so many of the department's faculty transcend traditional fields reflects the dynamic and inclusive intellectual culture of the department and its deep connections to other units on the UW campus, most particularly the Jackson School of International Studies.

History faculty boast an impressive record of research productivity. Since 2019, faculty have published 22 single-authored monographs and hundreds of articles and book chapters. A well-known presence in the history discipline nationally and globally, they routinely deliver keynote addresses and invited talks at conferences and academic gatherings. In recent years department faculty have won major book prizes, held leadership roles in prominent professional associations, and served on editorial boards and prize committees for leading journals (such as the flagship *American Historical Review*.) Faculty work is publicly impactful. A good example is James Gregory's digital "Racial Restrictive Covenants Project" which formed the basis for legislation in Washington State that compensates victims of government supported segregation and exclusion.

The Department houses the Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest (CSPN) and a member of the Department serves as Managing Editor of the *Pacific Northwest Quarterly (PNQ)*, a widely known and respected peer-reviewed journal first established in 1906. Sadly, UW History does not currently have a specialist in the history of the Pacific Northwest and the committee endorses the department's identification of this field as hiring priority. Given UW's position as the flagship research university in the region and its strong infrastructure for regional studies, it makes sense to build on its existing comparative advantage in the history of the Pacific Northwest.

The department has also managed to hire a number of impressive assistant professors in recent years, appointments that simultaneously fill critical needs and diversify the department in important ways. These young faculty play a central role in departmental life (teaching popular courses, working with graduate students, leading departmental initiatives). We got the sense that the department is justifiably proud of their strong

record of supporting faculty through the tenure process and beyond, and urge them to do everything they can to retain these promising scholars. Through their varied backgrounds and areas of expertise, new faculty contribute to the diversity of UW History and highlight its embrace of inclusion as a core institutional value.

## Graduate Program

Ten years ago, the external review committee drew attention to several modest problems plaguing the UW History graduate program: insufficient funding for students, a lack of structure in graduate training and assessment, a soft tenure-track job market and a failure to embrace the growing diversity of career prospects for those who complete the Ph.D. Our review committee is impressed by the effort that History made during the past decade to address these issues. Today, all History Ph.D. students enjoy 6 years of full funding plus summer stipends and regular access to departmental grants for research, conference travel, and tech support. They also receive a rigorous introduction to the discipline through mandatory graduate seminars on historical methods and teaching. The committee appreciates the range of mechanisms employed by History to track the progress of graduate students including grades and narrative evaluations for coursework, assessments of performance on M.A. and Ph.D. exams and an annual summer progress review for each student supervised by the Director of Graduate Studies. Moreover, the innovative new course, History 571 (*History as a Profession*), addresses the myriad challenges graduates face in today's job market and highlights rewarding career paths outside academia.

Given History's notable success addressing trouble spots of the graduate program highlighted in the last review, it is no surprise that its attention today is focused on new challenges, many of which surfaced for the first time or grew much more acute in just the past few years. As the departmental self-study indicates (and as we heard repeatedly during our campus visit), the most significant problem now facing the graduate program is the radical decrease in its size. History, with thirty-six full time faculty, has enrolled an average of only five applicants per year since 2020, with the smallest class to date, last year, made up of just two students. A host of interconnected problems created by this dramatic shrinkage raise numerous pressing questions.

- Since graduate students serve as T.A.s and graders for undergraduate courses, who will perform this essential function as their numbers are radically reduced?

- Without the support of graduate students, how will instructors maintain pedagogical “best practices” such as discussion sections, writing assignments and essay exams?
- With such small incoming classes, what will become of the graduate student “cohort” as well as the broader departmental community?
- How will faculty attract sufficient students for their seminars?
- How to provide comprehensive training to graduate students in their first fields in the absence of formal “field seminars”?
- Should graduate admissions be reformed to adjust to this new reality?
- Might History consider accepting a larger incoming class every other year or only accepting students in certain fields in select years in order to produce larger and more coherent cohorts?

The review committee heard a lot during our campus visit about the impact of the shrinkage on graduate teaching with one department member referring to a “seismic shift” in the way History trains graduate students. Professors and students explained that the vast majority of graduate teaching in History now takes the form of unevenly credited teaching overloads rather than formal seminars. Assistant Professors, in particular, complained about this difficult burden; some claimed that they were offering multiple one-on-one reading seminars on vastly different topics each semester. Others report no grad teaching or mention participating in a handful of larger “field seminars” that have survived in the Native American and the U.S. fields. These inconsistencies raise obvious issues of equity, as pointed out by more than one assistant professor. Complaints we heard repeatedly about a flawed mechanism to credit the teaching of independent studies over a three-year period suggest that further tweaking of this system may be in order.

Despite questions about graduate training, graduate students we met on campus seem content and praise the departmental leadership for creating a positive environment. They believe that a small graduate student population encourages community and close relationships between students and their advisors. They appreciate the new funding scheme which provides longer guaranteed support at a higher dollar figure than in the past. They don’t mind the new structure of graduate training which they see as “less cut throat” than a system based on large seminars. They feel that graduate student

voices enjoy a meaningful platform through the Graduate Liaison Committee. Finally, they appreciate efforts to provide them professional development opportunities.

A more enduring problem facing the graduate program over the past decade is that only around a quarter of UW Ph.D. students land tenure-track jobs.<sup>1</sup> This confirms the wisdom of the investments that History has made in “alternative-academic” programming and digital history. Going forward, it should shape the way that the Ph.D. program is pitched to applicants – as a possible route to academia along with numerous other fields.

The committee urges History to devise a deliberative process to address many of the issues and questions concerning the graduate program raised above. As noted elsewhere in the report, as a congenial and even-tempered community of talented scholars with strong leadership, History has the capacity to make intelligent choices about the future of its graduate program. To avoid a purely *ad hoc* response, we encourage the department to establish a more formal process, perhaps by convening an “*ad hoc* committee on the state of the graduate program” as a first step to intentionally reform the Ph.D. program so that it better aligns with new external conditions.

## Undergraduate Program

This is a department that is rightly proud of its dedication to undergraduate teaching and to cultivating positive relationships with its undergraduate majors and minors. We learned that over the past ten years History has undertaken extensive curricular innovations and outreach to diverse undergraduate communities. The major overhaul of the major and the minors occasioned the development and teaching of fifty-five new courses, including “four fully online, distance learning courses,” and the radical redesign of others; “drawing on evidence-based teaching methods and new technologies to reach larger, more diverse audiences and impart new skills.” This dovetails with best practices in the field. Like many history majors at other institutions, there are few required courses that serve as prerequisites and there are therefore many doorways into the major. As is also the case elsewhere the department serves an important role in

---

<sup>1</sup> Even so, in spite of a challenging job market and more limited resources than many private research universities, UW History students have successfully competed for and secured post-doctoral fellowships and faculty positions throughout the country and the world. For example, since 2014, UW Ph.D students have secured tenure-track jobs at University of Utah, University of Oregon, University of Idaho, University of Montana, University of California, Irvine, University of California, Santa Cruz, University of Montana, Loyola Marymount, Brooklyn College and National University of Singapore

the offering of general education courses for nonmajors. This means that History must appeal to both majors (and minors) and non-majors simultaneously.

The faculty drive to make learning both available and comfortable for students is palpable. If our meeting with selected undergrads is a reasonable representation, their students respond well to these efforts. They appreciate the existence of both a junior and senior seminar and are overall very enthusiastic about their courses – especially the smaller size – and their faculty instructors. They spoke well, too, about the care and quality of departmental advising, which was also reflected in our meeting with the staff. On the other hand, we heard less than we would have anticipated about internships and college-to-career engagement at the departmental level. We are curious about whether internships could be created at the CSPN, for instance, with funding provided for internships there (and elsewhere) much like the departmental scholarships for study abroad. With the departmental staff already stretched thin we hesitate to recommend too many new areas that would demand even more of their time and attention, but the presence of the scholarships and funding for undergraduates in general was exciting to think about.

The department asked us to consider how well the curriculum represents faculty strengths in comparative and cross-regional thematic areas. Our answer is very well indeed. Consciously adopting a more cross-regional and thematic orientation is also a reasonable approach to departmental shrinkage and the loss of ability to “teach the world” across time periods. This is most obvious when looking at the foci of the academic minors but also in other ways as well. Like many history departments UW is struggling to figure out how to offer courses more “laterally” across area, intellectual, departmental and school/college boundaries. At UW this seems to manifest itself with relationships with the Jackson School in particular that struck us as educationally rich albeit administratively challenging. We wonder if there are more collaborative and mutually beneficial possibilities that might be explored as a way of cementing the current faculty research and teaching strengths.

We were also impressed by the department’s embrace of new technologies, especially in digital history initiatives; its desire to use public history to reach wider audiences, and its dedication to learning and assessment through writing. Indeed the History Writing Center ought to be included in the list of major departmental assets and we encourage the faculty to consider offering more transferable skills-based courses in creative nonfiction and public writing for history. Digital methods for undergraduates also seems promising. And we were intrigued to learn about the role the department plays in teacher training and – at least in the self-study – the “exciting new initiatives in

collaboration with Washington community colleges to facilitate transfer students' transition to the university and to the History major.”

Obviously the department must continue to innovate, explore new educational modalities, and seek to reach more students where they are. Online and hybrid teaching is surely a part of this strategy, despite some observable tensions among faculty members about the quality of teaching and learning online. Some members are committed; others not so much. But here, too, we believe that the department's collegiality will serve it well in such ongoing conversations. Finally, we encourage the department to serve its curriculum and students with the addition of a second (at least) Teaching Professor. While we are very sympathetic to the department's not wanting to create a two-tiered faculty system, we also note that this already exists. The key, we believe, lies in how these colleagues are hired, supported and appreciated across their professional lifecycles. This can be done thoughtfully and well. Additional attention also needs to be paid to the presence and role of the adjunct faculty who are serving the undergraduate curriculum in dynamic ways.

## Staff

The history department staff appears to be highly competent and is clearly deeply invested in History's mission and its people. Staff functions are divided into three parts: fiscal and administrative services, academic and student services, and CSPN. Despite a slight decrease in size over the past decade, the staff continues to effectively manage the business of the department, provides highly valued individualized advising to the unit's undergraduate students, and publishes a quarterly journal. Over the past five years or so the university has taken steps to centralize and rationalize administrative functions (Workday the Financial Transformation), but these do not seem to have reduced the local administrative workload; in fact, several staff commented about confusing directives about new administrative processes, and multiple layers of approval for routine transactions. We also observed that staff workload seems to be somewhat unevenly distributed, with some staff members frequently stepping up to fill in the gaps of “what needs to be done” and a sense that faculty and graduate students do not have a clear sense of staff responsibilities. The staff's most pressing concern by far is fear that additional down-sizing or centralization of the service model will result in layoff and prevent the department from maintaining the high quality of their operations.

# Recommendations

## To the Department

Our recommendations to the department are divided into two “buckets.” The first bucket contains smaller scale changes that we believe can be implemented relatively easily, perhaps in conjunction with the arrival of the new chair. The second bucket contains items that will require the department to engage in deep deliberation about how it wishes to position itself in the coming decade.

### Small bucket

1. Actively focus on revitalizing the department’s in-person culture, including by resetting expectations around faculty engagement, especially attendance at key events
2. Develop a formal on-boarding (and re-boarding) process for faculty that sets expectations and clarifies staff responsibilities. This will help both new faculty and staff, and could create spillover effects that would enhance the overall culture of engagement in the department.
3. Address the graduate course teaching overload issue, and consider relaxing the “10 in three years” rule – at a minimum for assistant professors
4. Highlight when undergraduate students declare the major, perhaps by giving them a small bit of swag and/or a letter of welcome from either the Chair or the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
5. To the extent possible, use endowment and scholarship monies in ways that benefit multiple people or units, connect activities, or create spillover effects. For example, would it be possible to use some of the undergraduate scholarship monies to fund internships or RA positions that would expand a digital history project, perhaps focused on the Pacific Northwest?
6. Increase the transparency of how professorships are assigned
7. Regularize appointments of temporary lecturers
8. Improve the department’s website in order to better reflect its range of internal and synergistic activities.

### Large Bucket

Our major large bucket recommendation to the Department is to draw upon the existing collegial and trusting culture in order to have serious discussions about the

department's priorities going forward. Like all academic departments, UW History confronts a changed and changing landscape in higher education: not just shrinkage, but new technologies and political realities. Because the department has a tradition of trustworthy leadership and few durable factions – as well as a relatively large amount of endowed funding—we believe it has a better chance of forging new consensus than many peer departments. We believe that department retreats, *ad hoc* committees, and regular in-person engagement will help facilitate these soul-searching conversations. Further, we urge the department to enhance the impact of their resources by prioritizing expenditures that have multiplier effects.

Here we highlight a few of the big picture conversations we feel should be on the department's agenda:

- **What is our vision of a strong department in an era of shrinkage?** We all know that the former vision of history departments with a large tenure-stream faculty teaching across areas and time periods is likely a thing of the past in the face of national trends impacting the profession. UW History will need to continue to think about faculty hiring, graduate education, and curricular revision in creative ways that build on current strengths. While difficult to experiment and innovate in the face of restrictions, the department – and the College – must nonetheless be willing to dedicate resources to areas capable of growth and depth of expertise.
- **What will a high quality graduate program look like in ten years?** The department has already made significant changes in the size and structure of its graduate program, but resources continue to shrink and the academic market continues to falter. And yet, the department's undergraduate teaching program relies on graduate student labor.
- **How shall we engage with new technologies, in the classroom and in the discipline?** Any discussion about the curriculum ought to include the role of online classes in the curriculum. Many faculty are reluctant to embrace new pedagogies, but all evidence suggests that many undergraduates like to have access to some online options. The key is producing high quality courses with excellent instruction, clear learning goals, and rigorous assessment. Another new technology that we must all grapple with is the emergence of Generative AI, which will surely affect historical research and pedagogy in the classroom and beyond. And finally, how committed shall we be to digital history, as a research area and a pedagogical tool?
- **Can we craft a practical and realistic vision for the role of teaching faculty?** The committee's sense is that the addition of one or more additional Teaching Professors would greatly help meet curricular needs and possibilities, and we urge the department to consider ways that lecturers and teaching professors can

be ethically integrated into the department culture, and establish clear expectations for faculty by rank in the existing multi-tiered reality.

- **What is History for in the age of Trump 2.0?** All academics are having serious and probing discussions about the future of higher education during the Trump 2.0 administration. The department has the added challenge – and opportunity – to engage with the question of History in the age of Trump. The assault on historical memory, documentation in archives and museums, and the ability to think about the past in critical ways also demonstrates the importance of historical preservation and the dissemination of historical knowledge.

While members of our committee have thoughts and ideas about each of these topics, we are in agreement that there are probably no perfect solutions. Yet as we confront this moment of crisis, we believe that perhaps we can also find a renewed collective commitment to the life of the mind. Thus what is important at this challenging time is that members of the department engage with one another to find the answers that will best suit their situation.

## To the University

The University of Washington currently faces significant financial pressure, and we recognize that an infusion of new resources is not in the cards. However, we make the following specific recommendations:

- **Allow the department to hire a scholar of the American West.** UW has a History department that is already punching above its weight, and apparently has resources to support this hire. A hire in this area has great integrative potential, and would bolster some existing areas of strength.
- **Allow the department to keep its current staff configuration** which is serving the department community well despite previous cutbacks. More specifically, we urge the administration to avoid the impulse to further centralize decision-making and administrative functions, and rather create local zones of autonomy that will encourage flexible and creative use of the History Department's existing resources. In return for this autonomy, the administration should encourage and incentivize the potentially multiplicative effect of expenditures.
- To the extent possible, **provide clear and durable guidance about administrative priorities and process.**

# Summary of Process

In Spring of 2024, the Graduate School formed a committee to conduct the decennial review of the Department of History. Professor Katherine Stovel, (committee chair), Department of Sociology, and Associate Professor Dian Million, Department of American Indian Studies, served as internal University of Washington members. Professor Angela Dillard, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Richard A. Meisler Collegiate Professor of Afroamerican & African Studies and History, University of Michigan and Peter B. Zinoman, Professor of History and Southeast Asian Studies, Department of History, University of California, Berkeley served as external committee members.

Ms. Ann Busche, Academic Program Specialist in the UW Graduate School coordinated the review and the activities of the committee.

On January 15, the internal committee members attended a virtual charge meeting with Glennys Young, Professor and Chair, Department of History, Andrea Woody, Divisional Dean of Social Sciences, College of Arts & Sciences, Kima Cargill, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Graduate School, Sean Gehrke, Assistant Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs, Jeremy Davis, Director of Academic Affairs & Policy, Graduate School, Chris Partridge, Director of Academic Program Review, Graduate School, and Ann Busche, Academic Program Review Specialist, Graduate School.

In preparation for the charge meeting, the committee reviewed a number of documents, including the academic program review guidelines, the core questions for the history department, and the charge letter.

Prior to the on-site meeting of April 7-8, the committee members reviewed a comprehensive self-study report prepared by Glennys Young and the history department in March 2025, as well as materials from the last review, conducted in 2012. During this period, History Department faculty, staff, graduate, and undergraduate students were invited to meet with the committee in groups during the site visit.

During the site visit, the entire committee met first with the Department Chair Glennys Young, who was then joined by the department's leadership group, including Associate Chair/Incoming Chair Adam Warren, Director of Graduate Studies Christopher Tounsel, and the Department Administrator Josh Apfel. They then met with faculty in groups largely organized by rank, with the staff, and with both select groups of graduate and undergraduate students. The committee also met with members of the department's Diversity Committee, their Digital History Committee, and the Director and Staff of the Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest. In all, the committee met with 36 faculty members of the department. The committee also met approximately six graduate

students and four undergraduate students with no departmental representatives present.

The exit discussion included department chair Glennys Young, Adam Warren (incoming chair); Administrator Josh Apfel, Assistant to the Chair Nick Grall, Divisional Dean Andrea Woody, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Kima Cargill, Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Affairs Sean Gehrke, Director of Academic Affairs & Policy in the Graduate school Jeremy Davis, Director of Academic Program Reviews in the Graduate School Chris Partridge, and the Academic Program Review Specialist Ann Busche. After about 45 minutes the department representatives left and the committee held an exit meeting with University administrators and Graduate School representatives only.

The committee met at the end of the site visit and subsequently communicated via email.