

## **Department of History, Geography, and Political Science, B.A. in History**

**Action:** History currently is combined with Political Science and Geography (minor) in a cost-effective and efficient academic unit that shares resources. Based on Student Credit Hour revenue and subtracting faculty salaries (institutional data does not differentiate between the two bachelor's programs and the one minor program), the Department of HGPS from 2007 to 2008 showed a healthy profit of \$2.58 million.

**Action Plan:** Deemed "Mission Essential and Highly Productive," the History Program is not content to maintain the status quo. History is about change. The professional historians who comprise the TSU faculty consequently understand that for our program to remain competitive, it must adapt to a changing marketplace. We perceive this situation as an opportunity to lead the university into its second century as an outstanding institution of higher learning.

In order to compete with other history programs for exceptional students and faculty, we must put forth a brand that is recognized both near and far as reputable, productive, and dynamic. This will require innovative and visionary thinking and planning. What follows is a step-by-step blueprint that will serve as a flexible course of action over the next several years.

### **Action Steps**

- Recruit and retain faculty who understand the interrelationship between advanced pedagogy, rigorous scholarship, and active community service.
  - Ongoing
- Construct a sophisticated, contemporary, and appealing website that can be used as a tool both to recruit and retain students. Such a site would contain a mission statement, contact information, and tabs that would lead to faculty links and bios, course descriptions, syllabi, resources, student organizations, FAQs, a listing of department and community outreach activities, scholarship and internship opportunities, career information for history majors, facebook and twitter feeds, and blogs, among other items.
  - Fall 2011
- Develop a recruitment program that actively targets area high school and community college students. This would involve establishing an ongoing and permanent relationship with guidance counselors and social studies teachers.
  - Spring 2011
- Recruit undecided students on campus through undergraduate survey courses.
  - Ongoing
- Establish working relationships or partnerships with other units and programs on campus, such as the library (the reference, government document, and special collections departments, in particular), Urban Studies, Women's Studies, Intelligence Studies, International Affairs, Music, Language, Literature and Philosophy, Agricultural Science,

and the College of Health Sciences. Expand the team-teaching and/or cross-listing of courses to assist in building these vital bridges across the campus.

- Ongoing
- Establish active and working relationships or partnerships with institutions outside of TSU, particularly, but not limited to such entities as the Civil Rights and Nashville Rooms of the Nashville Public Library, the Country Music Hall of Fame, the Tennessee Historical Society, Fisk, Vanderbilt, Belmont, Middle Tennessee State University, the Tennessee State Library and Archives, the Tennessee State Museum, the Tennessee Historical Commission, the Metro Historical Commission, the Friends of Metropolitan Archives, the Battle of Nashville Preservation Society, the Association of the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities, the Middle Tennessee Genealogical Society, the Tennessee Arts Commission, the Center for Popular Music, and the soon-to-be-built African American Cultural Museum.
  - Ongoing
- Play to the strengths of TSU as a Historically Black College and University – emphasize in the curriculum and market the program as one that addresses the history of race, class, gender, social justice, and race relations – this would include but not be limited to topics such as slavery and the civil rights movement, topics that would have a local, regional, national, and international appeal. Such emphases would also play to the strengths of archival repositories in the area.
  - Spring 2011
- Create the Center for the Study of Human Rights and Social Justice. Its mission would be to explore, interpret, and teach about the historical struggles to attain the “inherent dignity” and “equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” that are foundational to “freedom, justice and peace in the world.” (adapted from preamble, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*)

Although initiated by the history program and housed in the Department of History, Geography, and Political Science, the Center would emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of its mission. It recognizes that the story to achieve human rights and social justice represents many stories and knows few boundaries, acknowledging that the narratives are historically, culturally, geographically, and demographically complex. Importantly, the intersections of race, class, gender, region, and power in the struggle for justice necessitate analytical connections across disciplines.

Academic programs, research, and community outreach will be central to the Center’s mission. Its undergraduate curricula would bring together disciplines and people from across our campuses and the community with the intent of encouraging students and faculty to think critically about the problem of justice and the attainment of human rights in civil society. The programs and curriculum will pose questions that have endured since the beginning of time: What is social justice? What are human rights?

Lecture and film series, conferences, symposia, workshops, service learning initiatives, public history programs, and publications tied to the work of the center will contribute important components to our campus and the larger community. The Center would build on the professional partnerships the Department already has established with libraries, museums, preservation boards, historical commissions, the United Nations Association, and area universities.

Grant opportunities will be initiated, including but not limited to the National Endowment for the Humanities, particularly their featured grants: *Enduring Questions* (“What is Justice?” and “What are Human Rights?”), the NEH *Humanities Initiatives at Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, and *Bridging Cultures: Planning and Implementation Grants*. In addition the Center will pursue funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation, to name a few.

- Fall 2011-Spring 2012
- Further develop the Public History component to prepare our majors for graduate school (MTSU has a Ph.D. program in Public History, but no such undergraduate emphasis) and/or employment in museums, historical preservation sites, and archival repositories. Students engaged in public history would be encouraged to publish in *IDEAS: Journal of Area Historical Studies*, an open access online academic journal which features scholarly articles by undergraduate and graduate students on international history. The journal is published bi-annually (June and December) by the Department of History, Geography, and Political Science. It aims at promoting student research and academic development through scholarly publication.
  - Ongoing.
- Develop a junior-level research seminar course that would follow the History Workshop course and precede the Senior Project seminar. This would aid in the retention of history majors by emphasizing critical thinking and research skills and by keeping majors intact as a cohort over time. As part of the QEP, History plays a significant role in WRITE program as it relates to all TSU sophomore students. Additionally, as part of a competitive process, History was selected as a WRITE program where our majors will receive advanced writing, analytical, and technological training as part of their completion of the major.
  - Fall 2010

**Number of Faculty:**

Tenured 10  
Non-Tenured 1  
Adjunct 8

**Percent of faculty time in program:** 96%

**Number of faculty and staff reduced if program closed:** 8 adjunct faculty will be lost immediately. However, based on the QEP, History is to receive two additional faculty members with full implementation of the WRITE program.

**Projected enrollment for merged program:** Not Applicable, HGPS is a merged program

**Individual responsible for action plan and timeline:** Erik Schmeller

**Implications:** Eliminating History as a program at TSU would reflect poorly on the institution. As with most Liberal Arts majors, specific jobs tied to a major are not common. Instead, the emphasis is on developing marketable and transferable skills such as critical and creative thinking, research and information retrieval, and written and oral expression—all skills that allow students to widely market themselves in a rapidly changing global economy. Implementation of the above Action Plan will allow the Department of History, Geography, and Political Science to meet market demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The following data is derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and projects job demand growth over the next 8 years. Some common careers for history majors include a few of the following.

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Projected Growth</b>	<b>Source</b>
Social and Human Services	23%	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos059.htm#outlook">http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos059.htm#outlook</a>
Public Policy Analysis	21%	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos314.htm">http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos314.htm</a>
Archivists, Curators, & Museum Technicians	20%	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos065.htm#outlook">http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos065.htm#outlook</a>
History Teachers	18%*	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos318.htm">http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos318.htm</a>
Lawyer	13%.	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos053.htm#outlook">http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos053.htm#outlook</a>

\*Predicted higher growth rates in the South, in underserved urban and rural populations—all three of which certainly apply to the communities that TSU serves.

Popular awareness of History as a desirable major is also increasing. Historian was ranked #7 in the “Ten Best Jobs of 2009.” [http://www.careercast.com/jobs/content/JobsRated\\_10BestJobs](http://www.careercast.com/jobs/content/JobsRated_10BestJobs) Finally, in a progressive democratic society the need for a citizenry educated in the history of our nation is not only invaluable but essential to the health and prosperity of our country.

We are the only public institution in Nashville that offers a major in history and teacher licensure. Within the region, we are at a distinct advantage compared to other public institutions by our proximity to such locations as the Tennessee State Archives, Tennessee State Museum, and one of the largest school districts in the state. Finally, we serve a large portion of first generation students that frequently come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds that other institutions are inexperienced in assisting and mentoring. We feel we are uniquely positioned to make a positive contribution to the growth and prosperity of Tennessee State University.