I. Mission and Objectives: The History Department plays a vital role in the university’s undergraduate and graduate educational programs. Its offerings afford students a critical component of a liberal arts education by providing a historically informed perspective on the contemporary world and the challenges that it faces. Undergraduate courses at all levels enable students to fulfill general education, constitution, humanities, multicultural, and international requirements. Four-hundred level courses are designed to prepare history majors and students pursuing a minor for a broad array of vocational opportunities and for graduate and professional education. The department also provides graduate programs at both the master’s and doctoral level and prepares students for a variety of public history and teaching positions. The department’s objectives include (1) transmitting the accumulated knowledge of the human past through formal teaching by tenured and tenure-track faculty at all levels of the curriculum; (2) generating and disseminating new knowledge of the past through innovative research; (3) training students in the skills of research, critical analysis, and effective communication; (4) contributing fundamentally to the University’s efforts to promote understanding of global, multicultural, and international issues; and (5) providing service to the local community as part of a robust relationship based on interdependence and reciprocity.

At the core of its activity the department embraces values it shares with the larger

---

1 Committee members: Hise (Chair), Casas, Curry, Nelson, Schauer, Tanenhaus. Approved by Department of History December 9, 2015.
institution: a commitment to UNLV’s status as a Top Tier research institution; to the “highest standards of a liberal education”; and to the development of the region and the state, as well as to national and international communities. The department likewise espouses the undergraduate learning outcomes specified in proposals for the reform of general education in 2010-11: intellectual breadth, life-long learning, inquiry and critical thinking, effective communication, ethics and citizenship, and global and multi-cultural awareness. The department also shares with institutions such as the Brookings Mountain West an aspiration to engage business, political, and community leaders from across the Southwest and Mountain regions who promote the development of Las Vegas and Southern Nevada in robust, inclusive, and sustainable ways.

Beyond these shared goals, the department is committed to having its full time faculty teach at all levels of the curriculum. It aspires to attain recognition for its accomplishments regionally, nationally, and internationally. The faculty strives to make core service contributions to the historical profession through editing, peer review, committee work, and translation. The department promotes engaged forms of learning at all levels, with an emphasis on the process and practice of historical inquiry, intellectual rigor, and imagination. In all instances, the department evaluates its success in terms of the impact that it has on students, colleagues, institutions, and fellow citizens. At a most basic level, the department regards a cultivated historical consciousness as being crucial to the cultural health of Nevada and to an informed understanding of the problems and challenges facing the present world.

History faculty continue to be productive in their scholarship and recognized for their teaching and service accomplishments. Since 2010 they have published fourteen monographs with leading university publishers such as California, Cornell, Edinburgh, Kansas, North Carolina, and Oxford as well as with respected trade presses such as Palgrave and Routledge. In
addition faculty have produced three edited volumes for NYU Press and Wiley-Blackwell along with six textbooks, encyclopedia, and related compendia for Oxford, Routledge, Wadsworth, and Wiley-Blackwell. Our peer-reviewed articles have appeared in some of the most prominent journals in the world: the *American Historical Review*, *African Studies Review*, *Journal of Social History*, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, *Victorian Studies*, *Environmental History*, *Environmental Ethics*, *Chaucer Review*, and the *Journal of Ottoman Studies*. Faculty have published extensively in foreign countries including France, Russia, Turkey, and the United Kingdom—both in English and in foreign languages. They have won highly competitive national and international fellowships from the American Historical Association, the Fulbright and Ford foundations, the Huntington Library, the Center for Advanced Study in Munich, the Institute of American Cultures (UCLA), and Stanford University. History faculty members have been invited to give presentations at some of the leading universities in the US—including Berkeley, Columbia, Stanford — as well as universities and venues in Istanbul, Lund, Munich, Munster, Paris, and Singapore. Faculty members have made central service contributions through their participating in teachers’ institutes; consulting for and appearing on television programs with historical content; through peer evaluations for the NEH, the MacArthur Foundation, and like institutions as well as for journals and publishers. During the preceding five years three faculty members served as editors for leading journals in their respective fields. Others advise or consult with entities such as the Chicago Historical Society, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, the Getty Museum, the American Institute of History Education, and the National Park Service. These and other achievements have gained recognition within the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) and at UNLV where in the last five years department faculty have received eight awards for research, service, and teaching and advising at the levels of the state,
university, and college. History faculty serve regularly on the Faculty Senate (notably twice as Chair between 2010-2015) and on searches for high-level administrators. In the best traditions of past achievements the History Department intends to maintain its reputation as one of UNLV’s most productive and visible departments.

II. Thematic Concentrations and Strengths: In 2008, the department re-organized the PhD program to better integrate the curriculum. Students in US History choose a concentration in the North American West or North American Culture and Society. Students in the European track focus on European Culture and Society. The department has clusters of expertise that support and complement these concentrations. These clusters of expertise are essential to the future growth of graduate education in the department and the faculty’s goal to foster a graduate program that draws on the strengths of the whole. They are also fundamental for our offerings at the undergraduate level, the breadth of which remains a central preoccupation to the department’s members.

A. Public-U.S. West-Environmental History: The department established its graduate Public History program in 1999; since then it has become one of the top ranked programs in the U.S. It won the National Council on Public History’s highest award, the Outstanding Public History Project Prize in 2010, and its programmatic research has been featured in the top academic journals and a wide range of media including the New York Times, L.A. Times and Washington Post. Eventually encompassing such areas as historic preservation, the history of public lands, oral history, and material culture, the public history addition complemented nationally recognized strengths in the linked fields of U.S. West and environmental history. The department
UNLV’s public history program is more explicitly integrated with concentrations in U.S. West and environment than any of the other top programs in the region and is on a par with the best programs in the nation. The systematic linking of complementary strengths in west-environment-public was noted by program reviewers as one of the great strengths of our graduate program.

UNLV’s public history program is also the only graduate program in the U.S. with the official “Statewide Cultural Preservation Organization” housed within a history department. Preserve Nevada was awarded the Las Vegas Historic Preservation Award in 2011 for advocacy on behalf of the entire state and was nominated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a full member of the National Partner Working Group. The program has generated more than $2 million dollars in sponsored projects and is considered one of the top three Land Management Agency Cooperative Ecosystems-Studies Unit (CESU) partners in the American West. The program’s director has presented to the US Senate and regularly advises other institutions on program building and sponsored project issues.

B. History of Gender and Sexuality: Research and instruction in the history of gender and sexuality constitute another area of departmental strength. Currently, the department has at least five faculty members with expertise in these areas, and their teaching and research span several continents and diverse American populations. The department has begun to highlight this concentration of expertise with increased publicity and new course offerings. In the last five years, faculty has continued to offer undergraduate as well as graduate courses in the history of sexuality in America and Europe as well as U. S. women’s history; in addition, a new mixed-level course highlighting the intersections of race, gender and sexuality in twentieth-century
America was introduced in Fall 2014. Faculty members have also developed reading lists for exams for both MA and Ph.D. students in the areas of gender and sexuality and have advised and supervised numerous undergraduate as well as graduate students in completing independent studies.

In addition, the department will continue to emphasize the funding and research possibilities for students in ongoing cooperative work between the department and the Women’s Research Institute of Nevada (WRIN). These include public history internships, scholarly awards, course offerings that include topics in civic engagement and leadership, and public presentations (speakers, conferences, and other fora). WRIN offers significant opportunities for applied learning (much like public history), funding possibilities for students in history, and various public resources on its website.

C. Empire and Dominion: Well into the early twentieth century, most of the world’s people lived as subjects of empires rather than citizens of nation-states. As enduring forms of political, economic, and social organization, empires have shaped debates about global and national politics, citizenship and sovereignty, and have served as arenas for the circulation of ideas and the contestation of authority. The department provides a home for scholars who study a variety of empires: Rome, the Ottoman Empire, the British, Russian, German, and U.S. Empires. Department scholars study these empires on every continent, but also from a variety of thematic perspectives: human rights, religion, migration, law, the environment, race, and gender. Individually and collectively, these scholars make a significant contribution to thinking about empires and the lived experiences of those within them. The study of empires helps students to develop key historical skills: students think critically about changes over time in governance,
culture, and society; they focus on connections across and between regions, emphasizing the importance of comparison; and they engage with multiple perspectives in assessing events and themes. “Empire and Dominion” is a clear strength of the department as a cluster. It could be utilized in developing thematic concentrations for undergraduate students, for thinking about shaping both U.S. and global components of the graduate program, and for identifying how the department can promote the expertise of its members. The faculty lines the department has identified as priorities could easily overlap in many instances with its concentration in “Empire and Dominion.”

D. Race and Ethnicity: While the United States census officially recognizes six racial/ethnic categories, historians have long acknowledged the problems inherent in such forms of classification. These shortcomings are compounded when the racial/ethnic categories of other societies across the Americas and around the world are brought into the equation. At the heart of the issue lies a truism accepted by most academics but still often ignored in the public sphere: that race and ethnicity are social constructs employed to formulate and express the values of given times and places. The Department of History includes several faculty members whose work critically analyzes how and why race and ethnicity have been developed and deployed in different contexts, primarily within the United States but also in other countries and societies. Their work covers a wide range of geographical locations (at least one on every continent) and themes (including gender, sexuality, class, violence, religion, migration, and governance). As such, the interests of those working on race and ethnicity often dovetail with the department’s other thematic concentrations and strengths. Studying “Race and Ethnicity” also speaks to all five of the UNLV UULOs. While reading about race sharpens skills of inquiry and critical
thinking, for example, it also encourages students to contemplate the meanings of multiculturalism and the ethics of citizenship. The prioritized faculty lines, which the department has identified, could readily overlap with—and further strengthen—this focus on “Race and Ethnicity.”

III. Clusters and Centers:

A. Clusters: Historians are interdisciplinary by nature of the questions they ask, the evidence they interpret, and the audiences they seek to reach. We count among our cohort scholars who collaborate regularly with colleagues from other humanities disciplines as well as the social sciences. That profile explains the faculty’s enthusiasm for university-wide initiatives to establish research clusters and centers of excellence. The department seeks ways to participate in cluster hires that support research that is recognized and valued nationally and internationally.

In terms of available funding, future growth and faculty demand, and societal benefits two initiatives may warrant pursuit. First, a cluster in “The Sociology of Medicine” tied to the formation of a new medical school offers opportunities to examine what works and why in order to codify better practices. Comparative investigations, historical by nature, would provide data essential for interpreting current and ongoing actions and events. Second, a cluster in “The Digital Humanities” would allow students to develop capacities in New Media as well as provide a platform for studies into the future of pedagogy.

B. Centers: The department has endorsed a proposal to develop a Center for the Study of Applied History. Over the past fifteen years the UNLV History Department became one of the most visible links between the UNLV College of Liberal Arts and the regional community. Our
Public History program has forged collaborative relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders generating extensive positive coverage in local, state and national media and bringing over $2 million in external funding to the university. The Public History program also contributes to university efforts in sustainability research. Preserve Nevada hosted a series of national symposia on sustainability and cultural resource management. This effort and all of our public history programs have been featured in extensive local and national media outlets as examples of history as a focal point for university engagement efforts. Articles in, *The New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Preservation Magazine, Public History News, Docomomo-US, Preservation Forum, The Las Vegas Review Journal* and *The Chicago Tribune*, and most recently *The Public Historian* describe our efforts as “innovative” and “important” examples of academic research achieving the highest standards of academic excellence while reaching broad public audiences. Our department has several nationally recognized scholars researching sustainability and the proposed Center for Applied History would build our connections in that critical area. The public history program also includes affiliated faculty in urban history, material culture studies, oral history and Native American history. An Applied History Center would facilitate expansions of our already extensive and successful efforts to take our collective expertise as professional historians beyond the confines of the academy and foster further community and agency collaborations answering one of the key Carnegie criteria for Top Tier research institutions.

**IV. Faculty Lines/New Positions:** The department currently has twenty-four full-time faculty members: sixteen in the United States, six in Europe, and one each in the history of the Middle East and Latin America. The department also has one joint appointment, two courtesy
appointments, a small contingent of regular PTI’s, and the occasional “scholar in residence” who represent a valuable resource for instruction.

The financial situation of the university has improved since the last strategic plan of 2011. Despite the rebound and a recognition that the faculty must grow in number to achieve Top Tier stature resources for new appointments are limited. These conditions are likely to persist and the department must therefore take heed of their implications in contemplating future hires. Two considerations stand out. First, the adverse effects of budgetary conditions have been especially significant for newer faculty whose commendable scholarly achievements have not been rewarded as they would have been in the past. The question of pay equity should therefore occupy a central place in the department’s future considerations. In particular, we must ensure that the acquisition of new positions not occur at the expense of those who have already made crucial contributions to the department and university. Second, in seeking approval for its expansion, the department should seek to maximize the impact of each hire it proposes. New positions should be justified in terms of their significance for the department’s broader programmatic initiatives, for the formation of clusters, and for the university’s advancement to the rank of Top Tier institutions.

In the past the department has defined its principal strength as the linked fields of U.S. West - Public History - Environmental History. While this cluster retains its importance to the identity of our program, the faculty recognizes the emergence of additional topical or thematic clusters of expertise that now factually help to define the character of the program and that have particular relevance to contemporary life in Las Vegas and the wider world. In light of the changing population of Las Vegas and the foci of important stakeholders on and around the UNLV campus, the department also recognizes other, related thematic areas where it would like
to see further development, notably the fields of (1) migration, mobility, and citizenship and (2) the sociology of medicine. Being ever mindful of the need to balance the requirements of a broad undergraduate and masters’ curriculum with the imperative of deepening the doctoral program by enhancing and complementing existing strengths, the department envisions the following new hires as its most immediate priorities.

Context is critical for understanding our requests. Since 2011 four of the most respected and senior members of our department have retired: Tom Wright, Andy Fry, Sue Fawn Chung, and Colin Loader. These faculty members played a critical role in the life of the department, not only in terms of governance and mentoring and in terms of their active involvement in guiding theses and dissertations, but also with respect to their areas of study: Latin America, US Foreign Relations, China and East Asia, and Germany and Intellectual History. These areas remain critical to the coherence of our program at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine any history department aspiring to Top Tier status without specialists in these geographic areas. Three of these four retirements relate to areas outside of the United States, which is precisely where the department is currently weakest.

The one replacement position that has come in response to these retirements netted Tessa Winkelmann whose position, “the United States and the Wider World,” effectively represents the continuation of Andy Fry’s line. Although we did hire Miriam Melton-Villanueva in 2012 (as a target of opportunity), and although her expertise in the history of Mexico partially compensates for the loss of Tom Wright and broadens our coverage chronologically, nonetheless Central and South America are absent from our curriculum. In short, even as the Department of History makes concerted efforts to advance its mission strategically and to contribute substantively to UNLV’s Top Tier aspirations, these retirements have created significant gaps that require
attention.

Other factors also entered into the department’s discussion about how to identify its hiring priorities. Strength in US history—depending on how one counts, 16 of our 24 faculty members focus predominantly or exclusively on the United States—has marginalized the rest of the world, with a few notable exceptions (e.g. British Empire). The result is that vast portions of the globe are effectively beyond the purview of tenured or tenure-track people in our department and therefore poorly represented in the curriculum at both graduate and undergraduate levels. The department is strongly of the view that this imbalance needs to be remedied, and that the current configuration is inconsistent with the constitution of peer institutions, let alone the Top Tier ones we aspire to emulate.

Further, as the Appointments Committee reported with some concern, only three of our 24 faculty members focus on any period before 1750, with only another two focusing on the transitional period from pre-modern to modern history. There are many reasons why the department has developed in this fashion—some of them reflecting larger trends in the historical profession—but our chronological imbalance has become worrisome and is certainly inconsistent with requirements of a Top Tier history department.

Moreover, the fact that UNLV just recently achieved all the benchmarks to qualify as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HIS) and has already fully attained the status of a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) strongly suggests that our department’s further strategic growth should be informed in no small measure by the resulting imperatives. Most importantly, as the population here grows more diverse, all of our students should have the opportunity to explore the historical experience of the countries from which those population groups descend. This circumstance contributes to the department’s conclusion that hires in the areas of South Asia, South America,
Central Europe, and Japan are our top priorities. The list is simply that (rather than a rank order); hires in one area or more will hasten the department’s ascent to Top Tier status.

The choice of geographic emphases was informed also by the department’s strong commitment to engagement with the public—a commitment most directly exemplified in its laudable Public History program. In short, the imperative of service, with reference to both MSI and HIS but much else besides, framed the department’s deliberations significantly. The department also took into account the imperatives identified in its last strategic plan (approved in September of 2011). At that point, the department identified Latin America and East Asia as its two most important hiring priorities. The hiring of Miriam Melton-Villaneueva in 2012 has led us to specify South America, as opposed to Latin America more generally, as an immediate concern.

Finally but by no means least, the department carefully considered UNLV’s broader aspirations for Top Tier status in its deliberations. Issues of diversity and MSI are prominent in Top Tier Initiative documents. We also considered how particular hires might contribute appropriately to increases in UNLV’s overall production of PhD’s and might ensure “an excellent and nationally recognized student experience.” In short, in establishing its hiring priorities the Department of History seeks to align itself with larger institutional goals, above all Top Tier aspirations.

Recognizing that UNLV has many needs at present and only limited resources, and its capacity to make new hires is limited, the Department of History nonetheless makes the following requests for hiring beginning in the 2016-17 cycle:

**South Asia/Indian Ocean** (chronological period open) at the assistant level: The department has
long contemplated a hire in South Asia, in part out of a desire to strengthen its course offerings and expertise in Asian history, but also out of recognition of the current and historical significance of this region to Asian and world history. The anticipated hire of a historian of China could provide the first-step in the construction of a concentration of scholars in Asian history. South Asia is home to the world’s largest democracy, and the modern state of India occupies the territory of historic sea- and land-based empires, including the Mauryan and Mughal Dynasties. India and Pakistan feature prominently in contemporary debates about religion, pluralism, development, and security, suggesting that the region will continue to be of tremendous continental and global significance. Polities in South and Southeast Asia have long been connected to the Indian Ocean, a conduit for over 5,000 years of human experience, exploration, environmental change, and the exchange of ideas and goods. The Indian Ocean has contributed to the emergence of languages like Kiswahili and the spread of religions including Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism; it has played a role in the development of important imperial polities in China, Africa, and the Islamic world.

A hire in these regions has the potential to enrich the department’s strengths in environment, empire and dominion, and race and ethnicity, as well as the study of religion and trade. In the same way that the Pacific Rim has become the subject of significant scholarly inquiry as a way of charting the history of the region and understanding the links between trade, communication, power, the environment, and empire-building, the Indian Ocean world has become a focal point for scholars. The connections between South Asia and Indian Ocean history (which also touches on East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and various European empires) would allow the department to make innovative (in both scholarly and pedagogical terms) contributions to regional as well as world histories.
**South America** (chronological period open) at the assistant level: With the hiring of Melton-Villanueva the department was able to compensate partially for the loss of Professor Tom Wright to retirement. Michael Alarid does some teaching in Latin America as well. However, we have no one presently who focuses on South America and only two people (Jeff Schauer on Africa; Cian McMahon on the Irish in Australia) whose research is in the southern hemisphere. Moreover, whether Brazil because of its economy, Venezuela because of its oil, or Chile and Argentina because of their place in the development of human rights, South America consistently occupies a critical place in the wider world. The department considers it crucial to convey this importance to our students and to contribute to the study of this region. In light of the legacy we inherit from Tom Wright, the growing Hispanic population of Las Vegas, the size and importance of South America for US trade, and the imperative of including the southern half of the globe in a department of our size the department considers an appointment of a new specialist on South America to be imperative.

**Europe** (precise chronological period and geographic field open) at the assistant level: Colin Loader’s retirement created another hole in our program. Whereas our expertise on the British Empire is quite strong, the situation is incomparably worse with respect to the European continent. Europe remains critical to the US, both in historical and contemporary terms. For example, the EU represents the fourth largest trading partner of the US, and Germany alone the sixth. Moreover, Germans remain the largest single ancestry group in the United States presently, despite significant demographic change over recent decades. Europe continues to occupy an important place in our PhD program, and has done so historically. Most likely, we would replace
Dr. Loader with a scholar whose focus is German and/or Central European history, based on the critical and dynamic role of Germany for modern world history, though we may remain open to other fields that are poorly represented in our curriculum. With this hire, we would seek also to address some of the other deficiencies noted above, for example by hiring in the early-modern period, by recruiting a historian of medicine, science, or technology, and/or attracting a specialist who could teach the history of the Holocaust.

**Japan and the Pacific World** (chronological period open) at the assistant level: While the department is presently working to hire a historian of China the wider Pacific World is not guaranteed coverage as part of that position due to the scope and extent of Chinese history in its own right. A second East Asian position is therefore desirable with a focus on Japan in particular. Japan’s unique historical trajectory in East Asia is worthy of consideration in its own right. For example, the seaborne commercial networks of East and Southeast Asia date back to the dawn of recorded history in the region and were an integral part of the first stirrings of globalization in the medieval period of world history. In addition, Japan proved to be a global anomaly in that it launched a successful nineteenth-century industrialization and modernization drive that was otherwise confined to Western Europe and North America. Japan’s controversial role as an aggressive empire-building state in World War II, and its distinction as being the sole target for a nuclear attack at the close of that conflict, have important contemporary relevance for students today. But this all being said, the position we propose should also bring a broader, global focus to the table. The rise of trans-Pacific economic linkages with the Americas in the early modern period intersects well with other fields taught in the department. Japan has the third largest economy of the world and remains a critical trading and strategic partner for the United
States, all the more important in light of China’s growing prominence and influence. Japan represented the most energetic and dynamic force in East Asia for over a century, from 1870 to the 1990s. Moreover, Japan’s trajectory proved to be a harbinger of the rise of other Pacific Rim countries and regions that today constitute one of the major trading blocs of the modern world, in the form of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum. The recent impassioned debate over the Trans-Pacific Partnership in the U.S. political sphere speaks to the relevance of such a position for our students in the future. Understanding Asian history is simply impossible without reference to Japan and its core contributions, for both ill and good, in shaping the world in which we live. It is worth adding that no history department can be considered genuinely Top Tier with only one specialist in Asia and none at all in Japan. Starting in 2006 our department had an assistant professor of Japanese history, Yuma Totani, but two years later she moved on to the University of Hawai‘i, and she has yet to be replaced. We are of the view that it is time to remedy this situation and therefore place the history of Japan among our central priorities for the next five years.

**Medicine and Science** (precise chronological period and topical field open) at the assistant professor level: The establishment of a medical school on the UNLV campus presents opportunities for research and scholarship in allied and ancillary disciplines. Faculty are committed in principle to hiring a historian of medicine who could contribute to the department’s teaching and graduate training while working collaboratively with colleagues in anthropology, sociology, and professional schools to study for example the role health care has played in local economic development, patterns of inequity in access to care, the discourses of public health and racial formation, and myriad additional topics.
The department has an excellent hiring record for top-notch scholars and teachers. It remains one of the most productive, dynamic departments at UNLV. The approval of these appointments would represent an excellent investment and serve UNLV’s Top Tier aspirations.

V. Program Development:

A. World History: Both globally and nationally, history departments have increasingly emphasized the importance of world history in hiring and course offerings. Over the past decade the department has taken important steps to expand its curriculum in this subject area, although there have been substantial setbacks as well. In 2005, the department introduced HIST 103: Global Problems in Historical Perspective, and the course has been taught regularly since then.\(^3\) HIST 208/HIST 209: World History to/since 1500 has been taught every year since it was introduced in 2006. Both HIST 103 and HIST 209 are intended to fulfill the international studies portion of the General Education Core Requirements. The addition of new faculty and new courses led the department to revise its survey requirements for majors, which went into effect in the Undergraduate Catalogue of 2008. But the department’s capacity to offer courses in fields other than American and European history remains very restricted in light of the loss of colleagues in the fields of Asia and Latin America and the fact that only two of our permanent faculty members address any history south of the equator. The department recognizes that broadening its curriculum in world history is among the most important imperatives for the near future.

B. Doctoral Program: The doctoral program was organized in the early 1990s around three tracks, American West, American Cultural/Intellectual and European Cultural/Intellectual.

\(^3\) For enrollment figures for HIST 103 (and also HIST 110) since introduction see appendix D.
During the 2006-2007 academic year, the Department participated in an external review of the Ph.D. program, and the department introduced a series of reforms to the program in 2008. This reform retained the previous intellectual identity of the graduate program, while defining the PhD program as one program with major areas of study in U.S. History, European History. It also defined concentrations in the North American West, North American Culture and Society, and European Culture and Society in such a way as to incorporate the broadest spectrum of faculty in those areas, and a more rigorous program of coursework beyond the minimum requirements to provide students with strong credentials in those subfields. Finally, it clarified coursework and exam preparation and introduced a new one-credit course, The Professional Historian (HIST 710), that introduces all incoming graduate students to the faculty, exposes them to the major fields and principal questions within those fields, aids them in navigating the program, and initiates the process of their professionalization. The course is now taught regularly; it has had a discernable impact on the mentality of our students. In 2013, the Department added two new courses, HIST 788 Comprehensive Exam Preparation and HIST 789 Dissertation Prospectus, to help PhD students organize their preparation for these important milestones. MA students are also encouraged to take HIST 788. Both of these courses are optional and cannot be used as part of the degree program.

In addition, the Department continues its commitment to providing a broad range of graduate courses in areas of faculty expertise. The Department is also committed to offering graduate courses in World History to take advantage of the strengths of new faculty in this area and to respond to the needs of graduate students. Incorporating a wider geographical range of history into every student’s program was a principal objective of the reorganization of the doctoral program. The Department has created a three-year projection of graduate courses that
allows us to insure that required courses are offered regularly and that the faculty teaches courses in a balanced rotation. The Department is currently engaged in updating the graduate program information on the website and creating a recruitment plan to increase the quality and quantity of graduate admissions in concert with the University’s Top Tier goals.

**C. Public History:** Students may minor in Public History at all levels of the graduate program. Because training in this subject qualifies graduates for many positions in the private and public sectors, student demand for Public History courses has been strong and the majority of our graduate students choose the public history minor. High enrollments as well as the need to offer courses in museums and material culture and related subjects led the department to seek a second position, which it filled in 2004. After losing that critical faculty member in the spring of 2009 the department conducted a successful search and hired a second public historian in the spring of 2011. Students from three colleges and five departments regularly enroll in public history courses and the Public History minor serves a broad segment of the university community. Faculty members in Public History collaborate with many departments, institutes and centers and strive to link departmental efforts with a wide range of institutional partners across the region. The department is studying the possibility of offering a public history major to meet high demand and address the changing nature of historical employment.

**D: Undergraduate Major and Minor:** In October 2015, the history department voted to consolidate our four concentrations (U.S., Europe, Latin America, and Asia) into two concentrations: 1) United States and Latin America and 2) The World. We did so to remove bottlenecks and expedite student progression and completion of the history major. This consolidation of concentrations will also ensure that all of the department’s upper division
offerings fit into one of the two categories. Students will still be required to do 12 upper division credits in their major area of concentration and 6 upper division credits in their minor area. Thus, every student will still be required to do at least 6 credits of upper-division coursework outside of U.S. History.

This consolidation of our concentrations is a short-term curricular fix. Over the next eighteen months, the department is also committed to developing a transparent history major that can serve as a model program for a Top Tier university committed to serving effectively a majority-minority student body. This may include developing a thematic component to the history major.

VI. Faculty Research and Development: To assist the department and university in reaching Top Tier stature faculty members must secure time for their research and writing. Faculty regularly secure resources internal to UNLV such as sabbatical and development leaves and course reductions via fellowships at Black Mountain Institute. The department has advocated for a more general UNLV policy of pre-tenure leave, which was cited as a particular need by external reviewers of our Ph.D. program in 2007. Faculty members need to make engaged efforts to secure funding from external sources. The department travel account can provide some support to faculty members’ travel research, though funds here remain limited. Where possible and appropriate, the department will also aid faculty members with the acquisition of new language skills—e.g. through software and support for intensive language instruction at other institutions.

VII. Students:
A. Enrollments: In Fall of 2015, the department maintained an active enrollment of 20 doctoral students, 27 MA students, and (by one official count, for Fall 2015) 146 undergraduate majors. The total number of students enrolled in all department courses in Fall 2015 was 3,196, not including history classes taught in the Honors College.

B. Graduate Student Funding: Growth in the graduate programs (especially at the doctoral level) will depend on increased funding. The quality of doctoral students in History has increased during the past several years, although rates of matriculation have decreased to some extent, in large measure because of limited graduate funding (see appendix A below). Maintaining the pool of strong applicants to our Ph.D. program, expanding it in the case of our M.A. program, and especially ensuring the matriculation at UNLV of the best students will require additional graduate assistantships and some dissertation fellowships. While history doctoral students have competed successfully for Barrick, Board of Trustees, and President’s Fellowships, we would benefit from the acquisition of one guaranteed departmental dissertation fellowship. An increase in the number of regular graduate assistantships from sixteen to twenty, as well as augmenting the amount of these fellowship stipends to make them more competitive nationally, would enable the department to attract, fund, and retain additional outstanding students. However, the department also needs to be realistic about the present financial climate.  

C. Undergraduate Research: The department would also benefit from increased funding of undergraduate research. In the last five years, several undergraduate History students presented their work at the Phi Alpha Theta (PAT) National History Honor Society Biennial Conventions in San Diego, California; Orlando, Florida; and Albuquerque, New Mexico. They have
contributed annually to the online UNLV History student journal, the PAT Psi Sigma *Siren*, which is peer-reviewed under faculty supervision and archived at UNLV’s Lied Libraries. Due in large part to our support of undergraduate student research, UNLV’s Psi Sigma chapter has been the recipient of seven national Best Chapter Awards since 2003. Our undergraduates also have presented their work at regional and national meetings such as the Southwest Oral History Association, the Urban History Association, and the Western Association of Women Historians, among many others. Some have received significant local as well as national recognition. Since 2010, four of our undergraduate History students – Yesenia M. Alaniz (2011), Emylia N. Terry (2012), Christina M. Thompson (2014) and Lee M. Hanover (2015) – have won University Libraries Lance and Elena Calvert Awards for Undergraduate Research. In 2015, History major Daniel Waqar was awarded the prestigious Truman Scholar Award. Given our students’ abilities and the faculty’s success in encouraging undergraduate research, funding beyond the department’s travel budget to support talented history majors’ research and presentations must be a priority.

**D. Student Recruitment:** The department needs to recruit additional majors and graduate students but above all to create the conditions in which admitted students may complete their degrees in a timely fashion and in high proportions. As the university becomes more selective, places less emphasis on FTE’s, and ascribes greater significance to the numbers of students completing the degree, the department will adjust its program accordingly. Over the last five academic years, the Department has graduated between 210 and 233 majors per year—a healthy rate of completion that the Department is committed to maintaining and enhancing.\(^4\) Significant

\(^4\) On graduate student matriculation and funding, see appendix C.

\(^5\) For numbers of students completing the program at all levels, see appendix B.
potential changes to the general education curriculum may also have substantial implications for this issue, and the department must remain mindful of this factor as it contemplates the future. For example, the development of First Year Seminar COLA 100 courses provides the History department with another potential student pool where we could recruit majors. The department has employed new ways of advertising its major and will also make adjustments to its website in order to render it more attractive and useful to potential students. We have also expanded the website to include social media as a means to inform and engage our majors about important dates and activities. The department has created an undergraduate advisor position; the individual who holds this position will guide students more effectively through the program, enlighten them as to the purpose of certain requirements (e.g. 251 and 451), and establish a more productive relationship with the Wilson Advising Center. It will furthermore consider the introduction of new topics courses at the 100- and 200-level as a way of generating greater student interest in history and as a way of differentiating its lower-level curriculum from its counterpart at the community college. The new faculty hires will be encouraged to create and teach new courses at the 100 and 200 levels as a means to not only expand our curricular offerings but also to expose students to cutting edge research in their fields of interest. Finally, the department will explore the possibility of introducing a larger number of courses—especially basic surveys—through distance education. The department must evaluate whether the creation of an online history degree at both the bachelor’s and MA level will serve to recruit students and increase the number of majors.

While we have had general success with our tried and true methods of recruitment, in order to gain more majors we will have to innovate and be more responsive to undergraduate students’ needs. Our PAT chapter is very active at the graduate level, but a key component to
our continued success lies in undergraduate recruitment and success. The department is committed to initiate new activities that welcome and engage our majors that create a more integrated community. For example, having “movie nights” where one, or more, faculty member present a movie of historical interest to undergraduates and follows up with a question and answer session could enhance our efforts to reach and welcome undergraduates. Activities that create an engaged student community will challenge our department; however, we must become more nimble in how to engage and present historical ideas to students who might, mistakenly, think of history as being “old-fashioned”.

**E. Student Success:** History students have proved successful in a wide variety of different capacities. Aside from the accomplishments noted above, many have gone on for further study at prestigious universities. Thus majors have matriculated at graduate institutions such as Exeter (UK), Ohio State, Chicago, Penn, North Carolina-Chapel Hill, UC-Riverside, and South Carolina, while MA students have matriculated in PhD programs at University of Illinois, Arizona State University, Johns Hopkins, UC-Riverside, Florida, University of Washington, and USC. Others have been accepted at law school, including one recent major who was accepted at virtually every prominent law program in the US—in many cases with generous funding offers—and also received internship offers from Nomura Securities-Tokyo and Morgan Stanley in Hong Kong. One has taken a position as an Archival Collections Assistant in UNLV Lied Library Special Collections, another holds a Wellcome Trust postdoc appointment in History of Medicine.

Our PhD graduates have moved into tenure-track positions at Northern Iowa University, California State University, Sacramento, Great Basin College, and locally (at CSN). Several have
taken positions outside of academia, for example as Executive Director of the C.M. Russell Museum, Curator at the University of Wyoming Heritage Center, Cultural Resource Management archivist at the US Navy, and Historian at the National Park Service. Several have publications in important journals such as *Western Historical Quarterly* and edited collections from the University of Utah Press and the University of Washington Press. Four have recently published books with University of Kansas Press, University of Illinois Press, and University of Oklahoma Press, and University of Nevada Press. Some have also served on committees for major organizations such as the Western Historical Association. For a university and especially a graduate program that still remain young, the Department believes that these are substantial accomplishments and will work diligently to secure similar or greater success for its graduates in the future. As of 2015, the Department has awarded 25 doctoral degrees. Jordan Watkins won the UNLV University Outstanding Dissertation Award in 2015

History students have also been very successful in earning awards and fellowships at UNLV and elsewhere. At least six graduate students have received Presidential fellowships, two received the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees Fellowship, while at least one has received a Barrick Fellowship. Students have received fellowships from the Newberry Library, the American Philosophical Association, The Huntington Library, The Massachusetts Historical Society, The American Antiquarian Society, The New England Regional Fellowship Consortium, The Virginia Historical Society, and the Western Historical Association. One student has been a University Fellow at University of Wisconsin Platteville. Undergraduates have won numerous library awards for their research papers. In 2014, one student received an award from the Urban History Association for Best Graduate Student Paper, and the President’s Graduate Student Award from the American Historical Association-Pacific Coast Branch. And in
2010 a former student, now doing graduate work at UNC, won the nation-wide prize for the best graduate student paper from the foremost American association for Slavic and East European Studies.

Beyond this, the Department has been able over the last several years to retain over three-quarters of its first-time freshmen into the next academic year. The numbers of first-time freshman graduating within six years have fluctuated substantially, and in the future the Department will seek to stabilize this number and to ensure its rise in the longer term.

**F. Enhanced PhD Production:** Since 2010, the History Department has awarded an average of three doctorates per year. This is consistent with our current admissions to the program, as we admit an average of two new PhD students each year. In years 2014-15, the department will have awarded 6 PhD’s in all, which is consistent with that average of three per year. The table below gives the distribution since the creation of our PhD program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With two new faculty positions—especially if one were to be at the associate level or higher—we could significantly enhance our recruitment of new students and effectively discharge the advising responsibilities for additional students. We would, realistically, be able to increase the number of matriculating students per year from an average of two students to an average of four students. With this faculty support, and with additional graduate assistantships, we would be able to increase the average number of doctorates awarded each year from three to six by 2025. (Since the average time spent completing a doctorate in History at UNLV is six years, any
changes in personnel made now would take at least that long to bear fruit in terms of completions.)

We in the History Department are strongly of the view that in order to increase PhD production in this fashion we need to make one appointment at the associate level or above. With the appointment of a rapidly rising or established major scholar, ideally recruited via an endowed chair, the department could substantially increase its recruitment efforts, which is a critical component of increasing PhD production. It is worth emphasizing that David Wrobel, a major factor in our ability to attract graduate students before his departure in 2011, was never replaced. Adding a scholar of that caliber and visibility will have a significant positive impact on our trajectory of PhD production, whereas appointment of only assistant professors would delay those advances.

**VIII. Resources:**

**A. Operating Budget:** The department’s operating budget has increased slightly from FY2012 ($37,345) to the present ($50,000). Our administrative staff indicates that as long as we are responsible about large purchases, these funds are sufficient for our current needs, including technology. The department is in reasonably good shape with respect to computers although the future of the university replacement program is unclear. In 2009 the university entered into a new contract with Xerox that has drastically reduced our departmental costs (from $1600/month to $350-400/month). That change also involved the acquisition of a new machine (model 5665), which is able to handle most of our needs, especially given our separate color printer.

Our physical plant is also sufficient at present. The newish Wright Building currently provides a well-equipped and spacious venue for History Department operations. There are
enough offices for faculty, staff, G.A.s, and scholars in residence and sufficient space for equipment. We need only to ensure that no space is actually lost to other entities.

Our support staff, at 2½ positions, is also sufficient. But that half-position was in serious danger of elimination in conjunction with the budget crisis in spring of 2011. Half-positions have become rare on campus—ours is one of the few that remain. In light of this fact, and given that the remaining two staff members would face serious difficulties in picking up the slack if that position were eliminated, the department needs to be vigilant in defending that half-position.

As concerns our travel fund, the department has an excellent record of funding conference travel and research, and the faculty has a strong record of securing funding from the University Faculty Travel Committee and from external funding sources. The department and university need to continue this level of funding for research related travel in order to maintain the high productivity and the national and international reputations of the faculty. The department should continue to fund necessary travel, while also ensuring that the overruns in any one year remain modest. As of 1 October 2015 the fund has $50,000 which is consistent with 2014-2015.

B. Department Website: The department continues to develop its website, and we are continuing to make changes to improve the layout and user experience. The department recognizes that the website can be a more effective tool for the recruitment of majors and graduate students, and therefore wants to make information easier to obtain. We also want visitors to become aware of what the Department of History has to offer. We will post more information on events and exciting news pertaining to the department and its students; we will post ways for students to connect and join the department community as well as share funding
opportunities; we will showcase first class teaching and faculty accomplishments and awards; and we will promote quality research.

**C. The Library:** Book, journal, microform, and manuscript sources, as well as digital archives and databases, are all essential to undergraduate and especially graduate education in history. The department made substantial purchases in conjunction with the creation of its doctoral program in the early 1990s, and over the years, the library has purchased additional materials for us out of its budget. Even though many collections and journals have appeared on the Internet and Lied Library has adopted systems of electronic accessibility, there are still many significant primary and secondary sources that neither the Web nor Lied Library offer. The department’s library committee works with Lied staff to purchase books, journals, and primary source collections in the subject areas of new and recent hires. Faculty members have made good use of resources such as LINK+ that reduce the need for new acquisitions.

The department’s primary emphasis has been and continues to be the maintenance of core resources that are critical to both our programmatic needs and the requirements of particular faculty members. For example, the Encyclopedia of Islam and Index Islamicus databases are indispensable to the field of Middle Eastern history and therefore need to be maintained. While perhaps compelled to make certain strategic concessions, the department needs vigilantly to defend the core digital subscriptions in history, which have faced erosion. We need furthermore to make sure that historical collections on microfilm and microfiche remain accessible, especially as the library is reducing the space available for readers. In discussions with library staff, the library committee will emphasize that these resources remain critical to curricular development and to the example that the department has set for the reform of general education.
The library committee will remain in close touch with the library in order better to protect our interests.

**IX. Assessment:** In 2005 the department established an explicit assessment process, an initiative Elspeth Whitney directs as assessment officer. Since 2005, assessment has become an ongoing process integrated into department initiatives generated from and through the Curriculum and Teaching Committee, the Graduate Committee and the new (2014) position of Undergraduate Coordinator. Data from undergraduate and graduate programs has been collected and reviewed systematically; a number of the changes indicated in this plan resulted from its analysis. The department has developed a variety of instruments for data collection, and these instruments have been periodically revised for greater focus and efficiency. These instruments include: review of culminating student work at the undergraduate, M.A. and PhD levels; tracking of the academic accomplishments and careers of students both before and after graduation from our programs; review of the structure of our program and course offerings in order to build on existing and future faculty strengths in crucial areas. In addition to ongoing discussion in retreats and other less formal meetings, faculty members review the assessment data in formal department meetings, and the results of these periodic reviews are disseminated in a timely manner to the “stakeholders” in appropriate formats, thus “closing the loop.”

Assessment has also taken a more instrumental form. A review of the M.A. program led to the creation of HIST 710 (see above), to the production of a new 23-page Graduate Student handbook, and the introduction of mid-term examinations in 700-level courses designed to improve student preparation and allow faculty to identify students who might need extra guidance. These initiatives have been further refined over the past several years. In addition,
HIST 788 was created to provide a more effective structure for students to prepare for comprehensive exams and a new and more systematic timetable for student benchmarks was developed.

Review of the undergraduate program has also resulted in substantive changes including the replacement of the current four concentrations (U.S., Europe, Latin America, and Asia) with two concentrations (United States and Latin America, The World). The Department has also conducted ongoing discussions on how to improve our Milestone Experience (HIST 251) and Culminating Experience (HIST 451) courses and has worked with both the Library and the Wilson Advising Center to facilitate student success in these courses, as well as in HIST 100. Finally, the Department will be working with Dr. Mary-Ann Winkelmes, Coordinator of Instructional Development and Research in the Office of the Provost and a member of the Department, to discuss the feasibility of implementing the Transparency in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Project in our undergraduate major.

**X. Conclusion:** The department is committed to providing UNLV students an exceptional education by staffing courses with regular faculty, strengthening and broadening its curriculum, insisting on rigor, and continuously assessing the instructional process to maintain high standards and to identify areas in need of improvement. We are also committed to hiring and retaining productive faculty-scholars who have established or will establish national and international reputations in their research fields. By undertaking the initiatives outlined in this document, we are demonstrating our intention of remaining one of UNLV’s foremost departments and our strong reputation within the national history community.
Appendix A

Current Number of Enrollments and Active Graduate Students, Fall 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Area of Concentration</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Euro Cult &amp; Society</td>
<td>N. Am Cult &amp; Society</td>
<td>N. Am West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total enrollment in history courses for Fall 2015, excluding independent study (26 Aug) = 3196

Appendix B

Numbers of Graduates and Majors in History, 2010 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates (undergrad level)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates (graduate level)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^Start of academic year (Fall semester) for number of majors

Appendix C

Admissions & Matriculation to the Graduate Program, 2010-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Masters</th>
<th></th>
<th>Doctoral</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>applicants</td>
<td>admits</td>
<td>matriculated</td>
<td>funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D

Enrollments for HIS 103 and HIST 110 since 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Semester &amp; Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIS 103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST 110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>