

**Comprehensive Program Review**  
**UW-Green Bay History Program: 2013-2020**  
**Prepared by Heidi Sherman (Chair)**

**General Overview:**

**Question 1: Describe your program's most significant opportunities and significant challenges.**

The History Program at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay is a high-impact student-centered program. Our number of majors is strong for a program of our size, and that contrary to national trends, they have been increasing in the last few years with 135 current majors and 45 minors.<sup>1</sup> The faculty have also worked successfully to redress gender inequities among our student body. We currently have a more balanced male/female ratio of majors than the national average and the percentage of women is increasing in recent years so that today it is 47%.<sup>2</sup> We credit our success to core curricular revisions, but also our concerted focus on innovative instruction that both attracts and retains a variety of students. Profs. Aldrete and Ganyard have won the University of Wisconsin System Regents Award for Excellence in Teaching, Prof. Boswell is the Director of the UWGB Center for Teaching and Learning, and Prof. Voelker the past Co-director of the Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars program. We are guided by the philosophy that students are active knowledge producers rather than passive receivers and our task is to guide students rather than simply transmit information, helping them build the skills of interpretation, argument, and writing in collaboration with fellow students.

The History Program is staffed by eight tenure-line faculty and two full-time lecturers. Our greatest challenge is mounting our curriculum due to staffing deficits and we have come to heavily rely on ad hoc instruction, taught mainly by Katie Walkner. During the last seven years, we have lost the following staff:

- Clif Ganyard (moved to administration and not replaced)
- Caroline Boswell (moved to administration and not replaced)
- Vince Lowery (moved to administration and replaced with lecturer, Lisa Lamson)
- Chris Stone (UWGB-MAN) (resigned and not replaced)
- Gregory Aldrete (resigned and not replaced)
- Harvey Kaye (retired and not replaced)

This is the list of current teaching faculty. Note that we all commit part of our teaching loads to unit and other disciplinary programs.

- Kevin Kain, Senior Lecturer (UWGB-MAIN) (Humanities)

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<sup>1</sup> [Julia Brookins, "New Data Show Large Drop in History Bachelor's Degrees," Perspectives on History \(March 2016\).](#)

<sup>2</sup> “Normally, there are three male history majors for every female history major.” [Julia Brookins, "The Decline in History Majors: What Is to Be Done?" Perspectives on History \(May 2016\).](#)

- Dan Kallgren, Associate Professor (UWGB-MNT) (Humanities)
- Mark Karau, Professor (UWGB-SHEB) (Humanities)
- Lisa Lamson, Lecturer (UWGB-MAIN) (Humanities)
- JP Leary, Associate Professor (UWGB-MAIN) (Humanities)
- Eric Morgan, Associate Professor (UWGB MAIN) (Democracy and Justice Studies)
- Kimberley Reilly, Associate Professor (UWGB MAIN) (Democracy and Justice Studies)
- Jon Shelton, Associate Professor (UWGB MAIN) (Democracy and Justice Studies)
- Heidi Sherman (Chair), Associate Professor (UWGB-MAIN) (Humanities)
- David Voelker, Professor (UWGB-MAIN) (Humanities)

Of the above, Kevin Kain teaches Humanities courses exclusively and JP Leary teaches mainly for First Nations Studies.

Caroline Boswell teaches two classes each year for History and Prof. Ganyard teaches one, usually in the fall.

### **Opportunities:**

We have an innovative and dynamic teaching-focused faculty. The history faculty's dedication to excellence in student learning is reflected in our broad participation in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), both as a professional development activity and as a mode of scholarship. Ten History faculty have participated in year-long SoTL programs—either the UWGB Teaching Scholars or the UW System Wisconsin Teaching Fellows & Scholars (or both). Through these programs, our faculty have worked with a cohort to discuss best practices in teaching and to carry out a research project on their own students' learning. Several faculty members have shared their work via professional conferences. Professors Morgan and Voelker have published the results of their research in *The History Teacher journal*. Voelker used his research to guide the reshaping of his course design for “American History to 1865”, focusing the class on the development of historical thinking. He has published extensively on this topic in *The History Teacher*, *The Journal of American History*, and *The OAH Magazine of History*, and he co-authored and co-edited a digital textbook alternative based upon this approach to teaching history. Additionally, Boswell and Voelker have become leaders in professional development around teaching at UWGB and in the UW System, with Boswell directing the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) and Voelker co-directed UWGB's Teaching Scholars program (3 years) and the UW System's Wisconsin Teaching Fellows & Scholars program (for 6 years) and leading many teaching and learning workshops around the state.

We are dedicated to fostering skills in our students that enhance their opportunities for success in the post-university context. Members of the history faculty have piloted and applied many new technologies for teaching, including blogging, classroom response systems (“clickers”), Second Life (virtual reality), podcasting, Twitter re-enactment, online cataloging (Omeka), digital animation, and filmmaking. This is made possible by professional development funds obtained by Prof. Caroline Boswell to send a group of UWGB faculty and staff to the annual Digital Humanities Summer Institute in Victoria, BC. To date, Profs. Boswell, Morgan, and Sherman have taken classes at DHSI in GIS mapping, Digital Gaming, and 3D Modelling, respectively. We also work closely with UWGB's wonderful staff of instructional

technologists who assist in our digital learning and instruction. In 2017, Jon Shelton collaborated with Brooke Uhl of the Brown County Historical Association and David Siegel, local scholar of the Green Bay Fire Department to guide students in our “Craft of History” class to research and mount a live reenactment of the 1880 Great Green Bay Fire on Twitter. The students each researched a historical person in the archives who had experienced the fire, and then during the reenactment, “tweeted” messages from their persona during a live reenactment broadcast on Twitter. The reenactment received media coverage from local media, affirming the relevance of history by its interest to the public. In another classroom context, David Voelker has established an online Encyclopedia of Wisconsin Environmental History, using the same software that undergirds Wikipedia. The website provides a platform for students to share writing and research on historical topics related to the natural environment in our state, including brief histories of state parks, for example, and of influential figures such as Aldo Leopold and Emma Toft. In addition to writing articles, students also participate in a peer review process, collaborating via the wiki to improve the quality of the site.

The historians have also been instrumental in involving students in the publication of *Voyageur: Northeast Wisconsin's Historical Review*, published biannually by the Brown County Historical Society, in collaboration with UWGB. The magazine, which currently has over 1,700 subscribers and is in its 35th year of publication, is a model of collaboration among UWGB faculty, students, and community members. *Voyageur* is edited by Eric Morgan, and Dan Kallgren serves as the Associate Editor. *Voyageur* is a hybrid between a scholarly journal and a popular magazine. While the articles are meant to be broadly accessible and visually attractive, manuscripts are peer reviewed and are documented with endnotes. Some authors are academic historians, while others are amateur historians with various degrees of training. UWGB students are heavily involved in the production process. Each semester, student editorial interns—mostly History majors—work to prepare magazine content for publication. Interns do everything from factchecking to locating historically appropriate images to copyediting and proofreading. Students are carefully mentored by Professors Kallgren and Morgan. They work with authors as well as with local libraries and archives. Additionally, students in the Design Arts Publication Workshop course design the magazine, transforming the raw manuscripts into appealing, illustrated articles. Overall, the magazine provides a couple of dozen UWGB students per year with the experience of producing a high-quality magazine while also connecting them with the local and regional communities.

The History Program has yet another strength in its emphasis on experimental archaeology. In this hands-on history approach, students learn about the past by trying to replicate how things were done in the ancient and medieval world. UWGB has an international reputation in this field, with Prof. Greg Aldrete’s reconstruction and testing of the Linothorax, the linen armor worn by Alexander the Great and his army; Prof. Sherman’s five-year “Flax Project”; and “The UWGB Viking House,” which is a reconstruction of a 1,000-year old grindbygg (Norwegian trestle-frame construction) donated to and rebuilt on campus in the fall of 2017. In 2018/19, the Viking House hosted classes on viking cooking and mead making, viking storytelling nights, and demonstrations of medieval games and blacksmithing. We will return to a full program of events after the pandemic ends.

Collectively, these unique strengths of the program provide students with a range of experiences that they may, or may not, experience depending on their course choices. We hope to

consolidate these hands-on learning courses into a Digital and Public History certificate, which would credentialize a path through the program. Currently, students create their own path through the major by picking from historical breadth categories that we have determined to be satisfactory for a student's general mastery of history and the profession. With the 12 credits of upper-level electives, students may also create a focused student of a period or region of interest. But still, this is a general History degree. A Digital and Public History certificate would attract students to the major, and also the university. There are a few programs in the state, but mainly in public history or museum studies. We hope to create something unique by emphasizing the digital history component of the certificate.

### **Challenges:**

Staffing is the greatest obstacle to mounting the certificate. In addition to staffing several courses at four campuses, we are also committed to contributing courses to multiple majors and minors. Many of the courses we already teach would work for the certificate, but we do need a trained practitioner in Public History to teach an introductory course along with other field courses. We have also become increasingly dependent on adjunct instructors to meet our lower-level curriculum. Katie Walkner, for example, will teach 11 courses across two semesters during the 2020-21 academic year. Additionally, we find it very challenging to meet upper-level breadth requirements. The early retirement of Gregory Aldrete and administrative responsibilities of Caroline Boswell and Clif Ganyard have left major gaps in our European history offerings.

### **Question 2: What are some things that would help make your program and its students more successful?**

Hiring a tenure-track professor in Digital and Public History would legitimize our efforts to create a certificate in Digital and Public History, which would help our students. Students want to study history, but they understandably fear not being able to find a well-paying job, or at the very least one they would enjoy. People outside the university such as potential employers generally understand what a degree in History is, but they would appreciate further an area of concentration that lends itself to working with the public and we believe this would assist our students' post-graduate futures.

### **Question 3: What are some program accomplishments worth highlighting? (Narrative)**

In 2018, the History Program was awarded the University of Wisconsin System Regent's Award for Excellence in Teach (Department). This is a prestigious award. Each year, every UW campus nominates one program for the award. In the previous ten years, the department award was given to programs in the professional helping fields, math, and the sciences. Our program was the first Liberal Arts program to receive this award. From the award letter:

“UW-Green Bay History was selected from among a select group of candidates, all of whom demonstrated an impressive dedication to teaching and an ability to inspire students with an enthusiasm for learning in general and for making interdisciplinary connections in the classroom and beyond.”

We are also proud that between 2013-2020, we have not only recovered from an all-time low in student enrollment (only 87 majors in 2016), but have grown to 131 majors and 45 minors, which is higher than in 2013 (118 majors). As mentioned in the introduction to this document, most History programs around the country have contracted enrollments, but our program bucks this trend showing steady recovery and growth.

**Question 4: Have there been any significant changes that have affected your program?**

See above regarding staff resignations, reappointments, and retirements.

**Question 5: Where do you want your program to be 5 to 7 years from now?**

By leveraging our strengths in public and digital history and the scholarship of teaching and learning, we see ourselves as being the pre-eminent center for education in the field of public history with an enrollment of 175 to 200 majors and 75 to 100 minors.

**Internal:**

**Question 1: Program goals (Mission, vision, learning outcomes)**

- We are guided by the philosophy that students are active knowledge producers rather than passive receivers and our task is to guide students rather than simply transmit information, helping them build the skills of interpretation, argument, and writing in collaboration with fellow students.
- Learning outcomes (We plan to revise these.)
  - Students will be able to formulate an argument about the past.
  - Students will be able to be able to communicate that argument orally and in written work.
  - Students will be able to engage their peers in discussion (argument) about the past.
  - Students will be able to understand why history matters.

**Question 2: Curriculum development**

Our program offers both a major (42 credits) and a minor (18 credits). Until 2015-2016, major emphasis students (as opposed to minors) took 18 credits of lower-level history survey classes (100-200 level) and 21 credits of upper-level history class (300-400 level). All history majors were required to take a capstone course, History 480. As student enrollment declined in 2011-12, we reassessed our program's structure and enduring outcomes for students. For years, we had used our capstone seminar (taught each semester) as our primary form for program assessment, with the instructor writing a summary report of students' general skills, with focus on their ability to write, research, and formulate cogent arguments. With the hiring of new faculty (Lowery, Reilly, Shelton), we decided to introduce a sophomore-level gateway course required for all majors that would introduce students early in their training how to read primary sources,

cite, conduct research, analyze an argument, and other skills that better prepare students for success in their seven upper-level major courses, including the capstone seminar. This gateway course, History 290: The Craft of History, is in its sixth iteration. Though our evidence is still anecdotal, we have all noticed a significant improvement in our students' performance in our 300-400 level courses.

We credit our growth in enrollment in part due to the success of History 290. As students track through the major, this class is one of the first in their college career made up exclusively of other history students. (History minors are not required to the class.) Since the class is often scaffolded with high impact experiences, students develop a sense of community in their major, along with developing core skills that will help them succeed in more advanced coursework. The Craft of History has created a sense of belonging and community for our students. Additionally, because our students are better trained, we have since developed more challenging capstone seminar (History 480) in which students collaborate on large projects that with the use of technology can be shared with the public.

In 2020, we converted the Voyager practicum into a course, History 400: Voyager Practicum, to be offered every semester. This course provides students with hands-on research and publishing experience and the experience of magazine promotion with the coordinating of public outreach, social media, and podcast design. We intend for this course to be a requirement for the Digital and Public History certificate.

### **Question 3: Connections to other programs**

- Humanities
- Democracy and Justice Studies
- Education
- First Nations Studies
- Women's and Gender Studies
- Global Studies

### **Question 6: Gen Ed, FYS/GPS, CCIHS (Lists)**

- His/Hum Stud 101, 102, (Foundations of Western Culture) 103, 104 (Foundations of World Civilization)
- History 205 and 206 (American History surveys)
- History 207: African-American History, and History 220: Environmental History

An additional marker of the history faculty's dedication to students is their remarkable level of participation in the university's first-year success program for under-represented, conditionally admitted, and first-generation college students—Gateways to Phoenix Success (GPS). This is a very labor-intensive program, as instructors not only teach a Fall first-year seminar but serve as faculty mentors, facilitate weekly workshops, and oversee a Spring service-learning project that is created by their students. The program has a proven track-record of improving student retention and success. Over the past several years, six members of the history faculty (including our department chair) have taught in the GPS program, some for multiple years. David Voelker

serves on the GPS steering committee and Professor Lowery recently became the director of the program. Eric Morgan, Kimberley Reilly, and Jon Shelton have taught in the GPS program and Heidi Sherman taught in the program for four years.

In the past four years, History has made significant inroads in the College Credit in High School program, accrediting six teachers across the state to teach a range of courses.

### **External:**

#### **Question 1: Outreach: student/faculty partnerships, collaborations, participation with organizations or individually**

- Gregory Aldrete was a distinguished lecturer for the American Archaeological Society and traveled throughout the U.S. as an invited speaker from 2016-2019.
- Dan Kallgren:
  - Hi-Q Quizmaster for Northeast Wisconsin
- Kimberley Reilly
  - Consultant for Museum of the Castle, Appleton
  - Research in the Rotunda, 2019: “The Criminalization of Sex at the Wisconsin Industrial Home for Women, 1920-1933,” Jacqueline Grabowski, Whitlee Neuens, and Megan Schoenauer
- Jon Shelton co-published with students Greg Lutz and Joseph Taylor, “Civil Rights in Titledown: Green Bay’s Open Housing Ordinance of 1969,” *Voyageur Magazine* Winter/Spring 2019.
- Heidi Sherman:
  - Hands on Deck (Board of Directors)
  - The National Railroad Museum (Board of Directors)
  - And represents the Viking House at:
    - The Brown County Federation of Historical Organizations
    - The Sons of Norway Gronvik Lodge

#### **Question 2: Contributions to regional infrastructure**

- The History Program works extensively with the publication of *Voyageur Magazine*.
  - Providing editors-in-chiefs and associate editors
  - Managing student interns who assist with publication
  - Promoting the magazine
- Each year, the historians work in various ways with National History Day by fielding questions about projects from junior high students, volunteering as judges, and encouraging history students to get involved.

#### **Question 3: Scholarly activity**

- Gregory Aldrete published 7 video courses for The Teaching Company in the past 7 years:

- *The Decisive Battles of World History*. (36 lectures) The Teaching Company/The Great Courses. 2014.
- *History's Great Military Blunders and the Lessons They Teach*. (24 lectures) The Teaching Company/The Great Courses. 2015.
- *The Rise of Rome: The Roman Republic*. (24 lectures) The Teaching Company/The Great Courses. 2017.
- *The Roman Empire*. (24 lectures) The Teaching Company/The Great Courses. 2019.
- *A Historian Goes to the Movies: Ancient Rome*. (12 lectures) The Teaching Company/The Great Courses. 2020.
- Caroline Boswell, *Disaffection and Everyday Life in Interregnum England* (Boydell & Brewer: 2018).
- Kevin Kain is a member of an international research project entitled “Orthodoxies and Politics” awarded a \$1,450,000.00 grant by the European Research Council in 2020.
- Dan Kallgren published a research article in *Voyageur Magazine* in 2016 and has since become the Associate Editor.
- Mark Karau, *Germany's Defeat in the First World War: The Lost Battles and Reckless Gambles That Brought Down the Second Reich* (Praeger Press, 2015).
- JP Leary, *The Story of Act 31: How Native History Came to Wisconsin Classrooms* (Wisconsin Historical Society: 2018).
- Eric Morgan was appointed Editor-in-Chief of *Voyageur Magazine* in 2018.
- Kimberley Reilly, [\*The Politics of Prosperity: Mass Consumer Culture in the 1920s\*](#) (Oxford University Press: 2020).
- Jon Shelton, *Teacher Strike! Public Education and the Making of a New American Political Order* (Illinois University Press: 2018)
- Heidi Sherman was the 2019 “Viking Apprentice”, a \$10,000 grant award funded by the Cargille Foundation.
- David Voelker, *The Powhatans and the English in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Oxford University Press: 2019).

## **Student Success:**

### **Question 1: Student Success**

The History Program participated in the NASH grant during 2019 with a project that focused on providing broad student participation in HIPs and equity in developing student researchers. We were concerned that only star students had the opportunity to work with faculty on big research project, that is, until they participate in the capstone seminar, but that is only one experience and at the end of their college career.

**Survey Results:** We conducted pre- and post-assignment surveys in order to assess students’ perceptions of themselves as researchers. Across five courses – including one 100-level course, two 200-level courses, and two 300-level courses – 89 students responded to the pre-assignment survey and 60 students (who had responded to the pre-assignment survey) responded to the post-assignment survey. The results were positive, with students indicating improvement in understanding, skill, and confidence across all 12 categories. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5

indicating strong agreement and 1 indicating strong disagreement, we saw increases in agreement ranging from +0.18 to +0.65, with an average improvement of +0.41. Students demonstrated the greatest improvement in areas related to research methodology, including

- Figuring out the next step in a research project. (+0.58)
- Identifying limitations of research methods and designs/approaches. (+0.56)
- Working on a project in which students have input into the research process and/or what is being studied. (+0.65)

These results suggest that the projects conducted in our courses did have the intended effect of improving students' understanding of research methodology experience with research and skill in conducting research. There is much work left to be done, however, and the program faculty will have a discussion about more intentionally infusing research modules into more of our courses across the curriculum.

### **Internships:**

Over the past several years, a growing number of history majors are pursuing internships. In 2011-12, 24% of graduating History majors held an internship. In 2016-17, the number had grown to 43% offsite internships. The History Chair now works directly with interns rather than the Humanities Internship coordinator and this seems to be easier for students, making internships yet more of an attractive option.

In recent years, History students have interned at local museums, the UWGB archives, Cofrin Library, and the Richter Museum. These internships often led to employment at the interning institution or helped with graduate school admission.

### **Question 2: Retention**

We have made significant gains in both attracting students to the major and retention. In 2016, we had 87 majors and 29 minors and now currently there are 131 declared majors and 45 minors. Curricular changes such as the adoption of History 290; The Craft of History, has certainly helped because it engages students as a cohort in the methods of a historian, a scaffolded research project, and allows students to explore professional goals. Additionally, the History Chair works closely with students in navigating both major program and general education pathways, seeking also to find ways for students to add a second major and minor with course reasonable course substitutions. By opening the door to including a few non-history courses as substitutes, we have attracted students with majors in Communication, Political Science, English, First Nations Studies, Psychology, and Computer Science. These students may keep their original major and add a History major with these means.

### **Mission Relevant**

#### **Question 1: Relevance to mission**

- The History Program offers students problem-focused courses that help students develop critical thinking and project management skills.

- History students learn how to manage data and information about the past in ways that lend themselves to organizational skills highly sought after by employers.
- History students also acquire the ability to write well and quickly in order to meet the many deadlines of a writing-intensive degree. Employers want staff that have developed literacy skills and can express themselves well and successful History students can do that well.

**Question 2:** Cultural enrichment (Narrative or lists as appropriate)

- The weekly meetings of “The History Club” at which students build a sense of community by playing games, often with History Faculty, watching historical films, listening to a guest lecture from a faculty member, planning a field trip, etc.
- We maintain an active Facebook presence.
- The historians routinely offer travel courses, with offerings to the following places in the last 7 years:
  - Belgium, France, and Germany (WWI/II)
  - Viking Denmark
  - Jordan/Israel (twice)
  - London
  - Poland (WWII) (twice)
  - Russia/archaeology
  - South Africa (every two years)
- UWGB hosts one of the largest National History Day regional competitions in Wisconsin, and History students participate in various ways throughout the year.
- The Historical Perspectives Lecture Series has been a great way for History students to meet famous historians and authors in other fields.

**Question 3:** Access (Does the program have any agreements with other institutions? For example, a transfer agreement with a technical college.)

No, but we would be willing to participate in a 4+1 program eventually when we’ve established the Digital and Public History certificate, potentially with UW-Milwaukee.

**Thank you for reading!!!**