

Adopted: May 25, 2004

**ACADEMIC SENATE  
of  
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
San Luis Obispo, CA**

**AS-617-04/CC**

**RESOLUTION ON  
PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A  
MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY**

- 1 WHEREAS, There is a demonstrated need in the Central Coast area for advanced training for  
2 teachers in the social sciences; and  
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- 4 WHEREAS, The development of a Master of Arts in History advances Cal Poly's mission of  
5 service and outreach to the larger community; and  
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- 7 WHEREAS, The Master of Arts in History as proposed by the History Department meets these  
8 needs through its goals, curriculum, and intended audience; and  
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- 10 WHEREAS, The program will be offered during hours and days when local teachers can  
11 participate; and  
12
- 13 WHEREAS, The proposed program meets all Cal Poly requirements for a Master of Arts  
14 degree; and  
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- 16 WHEREAS, The program has been approved by the History Department, the College of Liberal  
17 Arts Curriculum Committee, and the Dean for the College of Liberal Arts; and  
18
- 19 WHEREAS, The program has been evaluated and recommended by the Dean of Research and  
20 Graduate Programs; and  
21
- 22 WHEREAS, The Academic Senate Curriculum Committee has evaluated and recommended  
23 the program; therefore, be it  
24
- 25 **RESOLVED:** That the proposal for the Master of Arts in History be approved by the Academic  
26 Senate of Cal Poly.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Curriculum Committee  
Date: May 4, 2004

# **Summary Proposal to the Academic Senate of California Polytechnic State University for the Establishment of a Master of Arts in History**

## **Introduction**

The Master of Arts in History is designed for 1) current and prospective Social Studies teachers, 2) those who seek graduate training at the M.A. level to prepare for teaching positions at community colleges or before seeking admission to Ph.D. programs in History, and for 3) local residents who want to pursue their love of the discipline and career advancement.

In addition to meeting pressing needs of the State of California and local area residents with respect to teacher education (see **Program Need** below), the M.A. program in History also fits within the strategic plans of Cal Poly and the College of Liberal Arts. The preface to the report Graduate Education at Cal Poly, which employs Cornerstones, the Cal Poly Strategic Plan, as well as other documents, makes clear that Cal Poly is committed to building up its graduate education programs. The College of Liberal Arts Strategic Plan states that we should "Design, achieve, and sustain excellent productive academic programs which recognize and capitalize upon intellectual and physical resources available to us in a nationally known polytechnic university with a competitive student body." Strategies to achieve such goals include "master's degree programs appropriate to Cal Poly and market demand." The demand for additional training for teachers in the public schools and the community colleges corresponds closely with our program goals.

The program will not require additional resources from the state, Cal Poly, or the College of Liberal Arts.

## **Program Goals and Objectives**

The Master of Arts in History is designed to meet the goals of three constituencies. The first group is the population of teachers at all levels of K-12 education throughout San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara Counties who would like to increase their knowledge of History and advance themselves professionally by obtaining an M. A. in History. The second target group is the population of current Cal Poly students who, following the completion of their Bachelor degree, plan to become teachers. The majority of these students want to teach History and Social Studies at the secondary level and would like to continue at Cal Poly enrolled simultaneously in a History M.A. program and a Teaching Credential program. A smaller number of these students, who plan to teach History at a community college where an M.A. is required, or who hope to continue their graduate studies in a Ph.D. program, want to prepare for their futures by enrolling in a History Masters program at Cal Poly. The third constituency are those many members of the local community who share the current, popular enthusiasm for history and who want to enrich their lives through a disciplined and challenging program of historical study. For some of these local residents who are employed, an advanced degree will also enable them to seek promotions and higher pay.

The following five objectives will equip students with all these different purposes with important historical and intellectual skills: 1) Develop specialized historical competencies and an enhanced awareness of human diversity. 2) Develop critical thinking/problem solving skills. 3) Develop facility in oral and written communication. 4) Develop independent thought and research methods. 5) Foster lifelong learning.

### **Program Need**

National demographic predictions indicate that there will be an increased need for better trained teachers in the public schools and community colleges. Our program, in part, responds to this local and national demand. The CSU produces approximately 60% of our state's teachers, and as the Chancellor has stated, its campuses bear a major responsibility for meeting that demand. The History Department already takes responsibility for administering the Social Science Waiver and Credential Programs at Cal Poly. After a long-term faculty member who had assumed these duties retired, the department committed one of its faculty lines to the recruitment of his replacement. The History M.A. program, then, will allow us to both train Social Studies teachers in the Credential Program and, simultaneously, produce our share of teachers at all levels who possess real graduate-level experience in and knowledge of historical research and study.

M.A. programs in History are the rule rather than the exception in the California State University system. Of the CSU system's 23 campuses, 15 have History M.A. programs and 8 (including Cal Poly and some of the newest campuses, such as CSU Channel Islands, the California Maritime Academy, and CSU Monterey Bay) do not. The History M.A. adheres closely to the structure and assumptions of other M. A. programs in History already in existence in the CSU. Our program is modeled on the M.A. in History at California Polytechnic State University at Pomona.

The needs of the State of California and geographic necessity provide a firm rationale for the M.A. program at Cal Poly. No institution in San Luis Obispo County, northern Santa Barbara County, or southern Monterey County have an M.A. program in History. There is a terminal History M.A. program at U.C. Santa Barbara, approximately 100 miles south of Cal Poly. One has to travel 185 miles to the north, to San Jose State University, or 140 miles to the east, to Bakersfield, to reach an institution offering a History M.A. program. There is no school, public or private, closer than 100 miles from San Luis Obispo, which has, or anticipates having, such a program.

Many of our History graduates, as well as graduates from the Social Sciences and Political Science departments, enter the teaching profession, and many of them prefer to enroll simultaneously in Teaching Credential and M. A. programs. This cannot be done presently at Cal Poly, so it is quite common for students who would prefer to stay in San Luis Obispo to move back to northern or southern California to enroll in Teaching Credential and M.A. programs at other universities. Establishing an M.A. program here at Cal Poly would ensure that a significant number of graduates would stay here in San Luis Obispo to finish their post-baccalaureate work.

This need has been documented through exit surveys with Cal Poly students. In Winter quarter of 2002, the first survey was conducted in a both sections of a required undergraduate seminar for History majors and minors and among all students enrolled in senior project in History. Of the students who were surveyed, 66% expressed a desire to enroll in an M.A. program in History at Cal Poly. A larger survey was conducted in Winter quarter of 2004. This time exit surveys were completed in several sections of two required undergraduate seminars for History majors and minors, among all students enrolled in senior project in History, and by those enrolled in a course which is required for post-baccalaureate students admitted into the Social Science Teaching Credential Program. Of the students who were surveyed, 54% expressed a desire to enroll in an M.A. program in History at Cal Poly.

There is also substantial interest in the proposed History M.A. among those who are already employed as teachers in the local area. There are 260 History and Social Studies teachers in the high schools, junior highs and elementary schools in our target area: San Luis Obispo County and northern Santa Barbara County. During the Winter 2004 quarter, these 260 teachers were surveyed by mail to determine their interest in an M.A. program in History at Cal Poly. Within one month of distributing the survey, 83 teachers had responded. Of those who responded, 48% expressed interest in enrolling in our M.A. program. Some of those who responded were undecided (21%) and some were not interested (31%). It should be noted, however, that many who stated that they were uninterested already have a M.A. degree in History.

Julian C. Crocker, County Superintendent of Schools, enthusiastically supports this proposal for an M.A. in History at Cal Poly. He wrote that this program would "enhance the history and social science education program for our existing teaching staff in the middle and high schools in our county." He also eagerly awaits the program since it will increase further the subject competency of prospective and current teachers in the county's school system.

### **Benefit to Cal Poly**

The new population of History graduate students will offer important benefits to the History Department and to Cal Poly as a whole.

Graduate students enrolled in the M.A. program in History will serve as assistants for faculty who teach large-size sections of lower-division classes. At present, we offer some large-size classes (with maximum enrollment set at 120 students) without the benefit of graduate assistants. Instead of hiring undergraduate assistants, then, faculty will employ graduate assistants, thereby improving the quality of this work. (Please note that History M.A. students will not teach Cal Poly undergraduates. The History Department's Personnel Policy Statement requires the Ph.D. for tenure-track faculty members. We require the M.A. degree and all Ph.D. requirements except the dissertation for appointment as a full-time or part-time lecturer.)

Since most History graduate students will take at least some 400 level History courses as Graduate Electives, their presence in these courses will help to raise the level of discussion and intellectual rigor and maturity of the class. This will be a direct benefit to our undergraduate majors.

History graduate students will also serve in a new tutoring program for students of all colleges and majors taking History General Education courses. This will be a direct benefit to the entire Cal Poly undergraduate population, as well as to the faculty members teaching these classes.

The presence of a graduate program in History will help us to continue to recruit top-level faculty to our department. In several recent searches, it has been very common for candidates to inquire about the possibility of teaching graduate courses in addition to the regular load of General Education courses and History major courses. (Two years ago, for example, our top candidate chose to accept a position at CSU Northridge, which has an M.A. program.)

## **Curriculum**

There are two options for the M. A. Degree in History.

Students may complete the M.A. Comprehensive Exam Option (48 Units), which consists of Graduate Study in History (4 units); 5 Graduate History Seminars (4 units each) chosen from a list of five courses which are each repeatable up to 12 units (20 units total); five Graduate History Electives chosen from an approved list of courses at the 400 and 500 level (Note that courses at the 400 level will include extra work for graduate students, must be taken after the student has been awarded an undergraduate degree, and may not repeat undergraduate courses or their equivalent.) (20 units total); and Supervised Reading for Comprehensive Exams, which is to be taken twice, once in each Field of Study (2 units each for a total of 4 units).

Comprehensive Examinations will consist of two topics chosen from two different Fields of Study. This will assure the student a wide expanse of knowledge. Comprehensive exams may be taken from topics within the five general (geographically defined) Fields of Study: American History, European History, East Asian History, Central and Latin American History, and African History.

Students may also complete the M. A. Thesis Option (49 units), which consists of Graduate Study in History (4 units); 5 Graduate History Seminars (4 units each) chosen from a list of five courses which are each repeatable up to 12 units (20 units total); five Graduate History Electives chosen from an approved list of courses at the 400 and 500 level (Note that courses at the 400 level will include extra work for graduate students, must be taken after the student has been awarded an undergraduate degree, and may not repeat undergraduate courses or their equivalent.) (20 units total); and M.A. Thesis Supervision, which is to be taken over three separate quarters (3 units each for a total of 9 units).

Approval of the thesis will be by a committee, comprised of the thesis advisor, an outside faculty member (chosen by the student in consultation with the thesis advisor), and the Graduate Coordinator.

It will be possible for students pursuing either M.A. option to take up to 8 units of their Graduate History Electives outside of the History Department, with the approval of the

Graduate Coordinator. (A student specializing in Latin American History may want to take a 400-level upper-division course in Latin American Literature, for example.)

### **Admission**

Students admitted to the M.A. Program in History will meet the following specific requirements: 1) Possession of an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university. (Students without an undergraduate degree in History will be required to demonstrate adequate preparation for graduate study in History, as determined by the Graduate Coordinator.) 2) An overall grade point average of 3.0 for the last 90 units of their undergraduate work. 3) Submission of a writing sample, in the form of a Senior Project or upper-division paper.

Applications for admission and requests for further information will be directed to the Admissions Office or the Graduate Coordinator of the M. A. Program in History. All applications must include a writing sample, undergraduate transcripts, and two letters of recommendation.

### **Resources**

All faculty members of the History Department possess the Ph.D. degree and the requisite professional experience in their field of expertise. No new faculty are required for the M.A. program in History. (We will appoint a Graduate Coordinator from among our tenured faculty.)

No additional space and facilities will be required. Existing space and facilities in the late afternoon and evening at Cal Poly are currently under-utilized. This is precisely when the History graduate classes and many of the History graduate electives will be offered to accommodate the schedules of secondary Social Studies teachers, those Cal Poly students also enrolled in the Social Studies Teaching Credential Program who are observing in the classroom and doing their part-time and full-time student teaching during the day, and those residents of the community who are employed during normal business hours. (It should be noted that the History Department already has a good record of offering 400-level courses during the late afternoon and evening. In addition to scheduling our graduate courses at these times, we will also offer at least one-quarter of our 400-level courses after 3:00 p.m. when the M.A. Program begins.

The Kennedy Library already contains extensive holdings in books, databases, journals and magazines, microform collections, microfiche collections, resources in archives and special collections, and government documents that will support the M.A. program in History.

State of California  
**M e m o r a n d u m**

**RECEIVED**

JUL 21 2004

**CAL POLY**

SAN LUIS OBISPO  
CA 93407

ACADEMIC SENATE

To: David Hannings  
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: June 28, 2004

From:   
Warren J. Baker  
President

Copies: R. Detweiler, H. Hellenbrand,  
C. Stefanco, S. Opava,  
D. Conn, M. Whiteford

Subject: Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-617-04/CC  
Resolution on Proposal to Establish a Master of Arts in History

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I am pleased to approve the above-entitled Academic Senate Resolution. The proposal will now be sent to the Chancellor's Office for the fast-track approval process. It is expected that the proposal will be on the CSU Board of Trustees' agenda for its September 2004 meeting.

Please express my appreciation to the Academic Senate members for their attention to this important curricular matter.