



**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**

**Institutional Program Review  
Report to the Board of Regents**

Use this form to submit a program review report to the system Chief Academic Officer. Complete this form for all units/programs undergoing an accreditation review, nationally recognized review process, or institutional program review. The report is due 30 days following receipt of the external and internal review reports.

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|------------------------------|--|
| <b>UNIVERSITY:</b>           | SDSU   |
| <b>DEPARTMENT OR SCHOOL:</b> | <b>History, Political Science, Philosophy and Religion</b> |
| <b>PROGRAM REVIEWED:</b>     | <b>History</b>   |
| <b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>       | <b>3/13/2017</b>   |
| <b>TYPE OF REVIEW:</b>       | Institutional Program Review                               |

**University Approval**

*To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this report, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the University

Click here to enter a  
8-1 date 2017  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**1. Identify the program reviewers and any external accrediting body:**

Doug Biggs, Ph.D., Professor of History, Department of History, University of Nebraska-Kearney,  
External Reviewer

Matt Miller, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, South Dakota State  
University, Brookings, SD, Internal Reviewer

2. Items A & B should address the following issues: mission centrality, program quality, cost, program productivity, plans for the future, and assessment of progress.

**2(A). Describe the strengths and weaknesses identified by the reviewers**

The history program is generally solid. All of the tenure-track faculty have PhDs, as do most of the full and part-time instructors. There is strong comradery among the faculty. The reviewer notes the curriculum is weak compared with others in the region, particularly in non-U.S. offerings. In terms of productivity, the program seemed to the reviewer to be robust and productive. The history program also invited the reviewer to examine our online courses, where he had some minor critiques and suggestions. According to the reviewer, the program's cost is not particularly high. Any trimming of the history programs library resources will need to be done carefully, and that some money will need to go towards updated computer equipment, especially if the history program offers a degree online. The four challenges identified were: 1) helping faculty to succeed in promotion and tenure; 2) consistently high quality advising; 3) perceived excessive control of Instructional Design over online courses; 4) faculty diversity, particularly by gender.

**2(B). Briefly summarize the review recommendations**

- 1) Have new faculty begin developing their tenure dossier early;
- 2) Find resources for faculty travel and research;
- 3) Consider a single departmental advisor;
- 4) Allow faculty greater freedom in the development of online courses to help ease the process of moving the history BA/BS online.

**2(C). Indicate the present and continuous actions to be taken by the college or department to address the issues raised by the review. What outcomes are anticipated as a result of these actions?**

- 1) The reviewer correctly notes that no one has received tenure in recent years. The primary reason has been the move from a 4/4 teaching load to 3/3, accompanied by higher research expectations. The details are discussed at length in the Report. Provost Nichols put into place a strong system of checks and balances, including a third-year review to acclimate faculty to the tenure process and give those who will

be assessing them the opportunity to comment on their progress. As it stands, there are three faculty up for tenure in October 2017. They all came in under the new system, fully understand the expectations (including standards document, updated to the 3/3 system) and have been meeting them. I do not foresee any problems.

- 2) The department has as an expectation that faculty disseminate their research at conferences and in the past, SDSU has been able to fully fund one conference presentation a year, if not more. If funding for research is needed, especially international, the faculty will generally need to win grants, including those offered through the University. In our department, there was a \$4,500 grant from SDSU was won for research in London in summer 2017 and a \$53,000 grant was won for a Fall 2017 fellowship this fall at Biola University in California.
- 3) Having a single departmental advisor makes a lot of sense and it may become reality if the department is fused into a larger school.
- 4) In my experience, Instruction Design has never dictated curriculum. The course material has always been up to the expert in the field, the instructor. However, they do have a checklist of items which every online course shell needs to have before its approved (contact info, syllabi, etc..) For myself, when I try to assess a course, I look at the number of grading opportunities for students and gauge what is appropriate for the class (which is capped at 35 students, where face-to-face surveys are capped at 100). I also exam the amount of work that an instructor is investing per section. If it matches the workload document, then I am open as to how an instructor wishes to convey and assess material in an online format.