

Review

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Proposals in *Government & International Affairs, History, and Sociology* – Global Sustainable Healthy Communities Doctoral Education and Research Initiative University of South Florida

Review Team:

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The Review Team met with the Dr. Delcie Durham and Kathleen Moore who outlined the general expectations of the program review. The next day the Review Team carried out extensive discussions with Department Chairs, and then separately with each of the Departmental faculty members of the three affected doctoral program proposals. We also met with Associate Dean Bruce Cochrane and concluded our dialogue with humanities and social science faculty members from across campus, who were part of existing doctoral programs, planned doctoral programs, or could actively contribute through collaboration.

Drs. Benford, Kazemi, and Kuhn participated in an exit meeting with chairs and administrators.

We want to thank all members of the USF community for their hospitality and their active participation in a frank dialogue regarding the creation of the three proposed doctoral programs. A special thanks goes to Ms. Patricia Claytor for arranging our trip and being a most gracious chauffeur.

Introduction:

At the outset, the Review Team believes that each doctoral program must retain its disciplinary identity. Without departmental champions and a strong disciplinary commitment a more generic program would very quickly lose its academic imprint and intellectual legitimacy. The specific intellectual training is vital in preserving rigorous academic standards as well as achieving a depth of intellectual study. Furthermore,

employment opportunities would diminish without the clear imprint of a specific discipline.

Having said this, the Review Team also strongly endorses the institutional effort to integrate the three proposed doctoral programs within the institutional focus area of *Global Sustainable Healthy Communities*. Faculty members of all three programs appear to enthusiastically embrace the opportunity to engage in inter-discipline learning and research. In numerous instances they are already actively pursuing research collaborations with colleagues from other disciplines. Faculty members also understand that the complexities of issues and problems in need of solutions often require interdisciplinary research approaches. The individual disciplinary points of view complement those of other disciplinary views resulting in new ways of solving complex problems. Although the climate for collaboration is developing at USF, more formal institutional mechanisms need to be put into place to endorse and promote collaborative learning and research for both faculty and doctoral students.

To strengthen both the disciplinary doctoral programs and the collaborative linkages between the programs, the Review Team will make a number of recommendations which we believe will more effectively sustain and harvest the opportunities of the institutional interdisciplinary thrust of *Global Sustainable Healthy Communities*.

Collaboration:

As noted before, there exists a climate of collaboration on the University of South Florida Campus. Not only within the College of Arts and Sciences do faculty members have active research collaborations, but this cooperative spirit extends into other Colleges. These activities organized by individual faculty members evolved naturally because of common research interests and they are to be commended. However, the Review Team recommends that a more proactive institutional support system be put into place to assure the sustainability of the present interdisciplinary activities. Furthermore, the development of this culture of collaboration would discourage the individual doctoral programs from retreating into their disciplinary silos. With this in mind, we recommend consideration for an administrative position to oversee all aspects of research and learning integration between existing and future doctoral programs. Such a position could be housed in the provost's office, the Graduate School, or in the College of Arts and Sciences, since most of the doctoral programs in question are within that College. This person would be responsible for administering competitive financial incentive programs that promote collaborative research and instructional activities. Within this context we also encourage the expansion of a university-wide speaker series that celebrates the need and utility of interdisciplinary strategies to solve complex problems facing communities. To further promote the interaction between faculty and students of the various doctoral programs, we also suggest organizing interdisciplinary roundtables where faculty and doctoral students can present their research findings, whereby the intellectual dialogue might transcend disciplinary boundaries. And finally, we encourage the Provost's Office to provide funds for seed grants specifically earmarked for collaborative projects related to the *Global Sustainable Healthy Communities* initiative.

Other issues common to all three doctoral programs that need to be considered to assure greater prospects for the success of doctoral program integration include: university policies regarding dual/joint/adjunct/associate appointments, workload, team teaching, research vs. teaching assistantships, and faculty development might need to be clarified and possibly revised. For example, in our discussion we found that some faculty and administrators underestimated the impact of doctoral education on workload. The mentoring of doctoral students and dissertation supervision are significant demands on a professor's time. To permit easier paths toward collaborative research and teaching dual appointments should be considered for faculty whose research and/or teaching interests bridge one or more disciplines. Presently, most graduate students who are financially supported are teaching assistants. Some consideration should be given to making research assistantships available to a select number of doctoral students so that they might complete their dissertation in a timely manner. Faculty development funds should be provided for workshops, seminars, and conferences that deal with interdisciplinary topics.

We recognize that the curriculum makes an effort to assure that doctoral students interact with their colleagues in the other doctoral programs. The most prominent is the capstone course, where students come together and work on interdisciplinary research projects. The requirement to choose a set of electives from courses of the other doctoral programs significantly contributes to broadening the intellectual horizon of the students, and finally the external member on the dissertation committee is a further attempt at breaking down more narrowly defined disciplinary boundaries. The Review Team recognizes all these as essential in promoting collaboration between the doctoral programs, but to further strengthen those bonds, we recommend that early on in the program all doctoral students are brought together in possibly a pro-seminar, where the central focus of sustainable healthy communities can be effectively articulated by faculty from the different academic disciplines. Doctoral students early on should recognize that there is indeed a interdisciplinary emphasis which will give them a different educational experience than what, for example, might be offered in traditional history, sociology or government & international affairs doctoral programs. We also found that the Patel Center, as it develops, could play a significant leadership role in promoting research and learning collaboration between doctoral programs at South Florida University.

Program Specific Comments

The Review Team also offers the follow suggestions and recommendations specifically directed at each of the three individual doctoral programs:

SOCIOLOGY

The Sociology Department is well-positioned to add a Ph.D. program. Its undergraduate program is growing rapidly. It has established a track record of training and placing its master's students in prestigious and demanding doctoral programs. It has outstanding

leadership and practices shared governance well. It has developed a doctoral level curriculum. Finally it has an outstanding faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching and research. The Sociology faculty expressed considerable enthusiasm toward conducting interdisciplinary, collaborative research and developing a doctoral program focusing in part on Global Sustainable Healthy Communities. The faculty appears committed, prepared, and well-qualified to implement and sustain this endeavor.

Faculty Research and Scholarship

With the addition of two new faculty members in the fall of 2007 the Sociology Department will include fourteen regular graduate faculty members (including Dean Skvoretz) and one instructor. Ten of the fourteen regular faculty members are tenured—four having attained the rank of Full Professor.

Virtually all Sociology faculty members actively engage in intensive scholarly research. Their research interests cover most of the major substantive areas of the discipline including: globalization, environmental sociology, disasters, migration, race and ethnicity, gender, social inequalities, social problems, community, religion, health and medicine, education, family, childhood, sexualities, identity, disabilities, emotions, deviance, alcohol and drugs, social networks, social movements, sport, and social theory. As the forgoing list of research areas indicates, a significant proportion of the Sociology faculty focus on areas related to Global Sustainable Healthy Communities. Moreover, faculty research projects strike an unusual balance between basic and applied research.

In terms of scholarly publications, faculty research productivity has been excellent in recent years. Faculty have published numerous articles in the discipline's most prestigious, peer-reviewed, general and substantive specialty journals including, but not limited to, the following: *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Annual Review of Sociology*, *Social Forces*, *Social Problems*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, *The Sociological Quarterly*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Sociological Inquiry*, *Symbolic Interaction*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Ethnography*, *Human Organization*, *Clinical Sociology Review*, *Journal of Mathematical Sociology*, *Sociological Theory*, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *Gender & Society*, *Signs*, *Sexualities*, *Deviant Behavior*, *Work and Occupations*, *Social Networks*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Sociology of Religion*, *Review of Religious Research*, *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, *Sociology of Health and Illness*, *Social Science and Medicine*, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *Educational Review*, and *Criminal Justice Review*. Sociology faculty members have also produced several books, research monographs, edited collections, readers, and textbooks. Many of their publications have helped to shape substantive areas of the discipline and have garnered national awards. For example, Dr. Donileen Loseke's *The Battered Woman and Shelters: The Social Construction of Wife Abuse*, which received the 1994 Charles Horton Cooley Award for the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction, remains one of the most frequently cited and influential works on the topic of domestic violence. Faculty members have also authored more than 60 professional technical reports on a wide array of topics of interest to the community and

various human services agencies. Many of their reports pertain directly to the institutional focus area of Global Sustainable Healthy Communities. Finally, we were impressed by the number of major grant applications Sociology faculty have recently submitted.

We were also struck by the extensiveness of ongoing research collaborations between Sociology faculty and faculty members from other disciplines. The department has developed numerous interdisciplinary linkages in pursuit of fulfilling its tripartite mission of teaching, research, and service. Approximately thirty outstanding scholars from other disciplines serve as “Department Affiliates” including faculty from Africana Studies, Anthropology, Communication, Criminology, Education, Geography, Philosophy, Public Health, Religious Studies, Social Work, the Chiles Center for Healthy Mothers and Babies, and the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute. These interdisciplinary linkages serve the students and faculty well by bringing fresh ideas, unique data sources, diverse methodological tools, and distinctive substantive perspectives to Sociology. Department Affiliates currently serve on Sociology master’s committees. Such existing interdisciplinary ties should serve Sociology well as it seeks to develop and sustain a doctoral program having Global Sustainable Healthy Communities as one of its primary foci.

Graduate Faculty Teaching Resources

Sociology has a core of dedicated faculty who were trained at many of the premier sociology programs in the country including: Duke, California-Santa Barbara, Notre Dame, Northwestern, Illinois, Temple, Tulane, Penn State, Oregon, California-Santa Cruz, UCLA, Washington State, Pennsylvania, and Pittsburgh. All but one of the faculty have had some doctoral committee experience (primarily as outside members), and a few have chaired doctoral committees. All have directed several masters’ theses. However, only Professors Mayberry (Chair), Skvoretz (Dean), Stamps (former Provost), and Aranda (new hire) have served on the faculty of doctoral granting departments. We believe that the sociology faculty members who have not had direct experience teaching in doctoral programs might not be fully aware of the amount of work associated with the process. Serving as an outside member on a doctoral committee and serving on masters committees do not adequately prepare graduate faculty members to mentor doctoral students. In consideration of their relative lack of experience coupled with the recent passing of Dr. Spencer Cahill, a preeminent scholar, we recommend that at least two of Sociology’s proposed new hires be made at the senior level, preferably scholars at least approaching mid-career who have had extensive experience in Ph.D. granting departments mentoring doctoral students.

Curriculum

Sociology’s graduate curriculum is comprehensive, rigorous, and focused, yet flexible and diverse. Students in the doctoral program will undergo extensive methodological, theoretical, and substantive training. They will be required to complete seminars on Advanced Sociological Theory, Advanced Research Methods and Study Design, an

additional methodology seminar, and an interdisciplinary capstone seminar. Moreover, recent substantive additions to the program (Globalization and Cities, Urban Research, Immigration and Transnationalism) as well as proposed additional seminars (Community Analysis and Comparative Sociology of Health Care Systems) should provide ample opportunities to pursue advanced studies in topics within the Global Sustainable Healthy Communities focus. As noted above, we recommend that Sociology, History, and Government and International Affairs collaborate to create an interdisciplinary, introductory seminar or pro-seminar to ensure some initial common experience and shared focus.

Doctoral Student Support

We are somewhat concerned that the current plan might not provide for adequate doctoral student support. The institutional commitment to the base assistantship budget should be sufficient to support students from entry into the program to completion of their dissertations. This typically requires four years of stipends. In order to ensure that the program is able to recruit and retain outstanding students, stipends ought to be nationally competitive. The good news is that, unlike masters' students, doctoral students can be assigned some teaching duties (preferably no more than one course section per semester) which in turn generate credit hours that more than offset the total costs of their stipends.

Finally, we note that Sociology's Director of Graduate Studies could use some clerical support so that she has some time to conduct research.

GOVERNMENT & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (GIA)

The Department of Government and International Affairs (GIA) at the University of South Florida is an unusual entity in that it is organized around three separate units in Political Science (PS), International Studies (IS), and Public Administration (PA). The first two units are commonly housed in political science departments as the interconnection between them is strong. They are in effect an integrated unit in most US university departments. The anomaly is the PA program as in substantial majority of universities public administration (or public policy/public service) programs are either separate departments or separate schools. The logic behind this arrangement is defensible since PA curriculum and faculty generally tend to be oriented towards practice of public administration as opposed to the more theoretical orientation of the other two units.

The challenge for GIA's attempt to join the proposed Ph.D programs at USF is to ensure that the division between theory and practice does not hinder effective curricular development and student training. We are given assurance by GIA chair and the director of the PA. that their joint effort will not be a problem. The consultants were told on more than one occasion that the PA curriculum has been shifting from the study of *government* to that of *governance* with greater emphasis on political behavior within institutions and beyond. We further noted that PA has become much more international in orientation with a focus on public health and interdisciplinary international studies. The director of

PA and other unit faculty members have already made this transition in their teaching and research.

The consultants support this progressive move but remain somewhat concerned should the separateness of the three units cause potential divisions and fractiousness. Any such development will have a deleterious impact on the joint Ph.D program. It is incumbent upon the key administrators to ensure the integrity of the joint program.

Faculty

The Department has 23 full-time faculty members at present and it expects to add another three by 2007. The GIA documents envisage that about one-third of the faculty will devote 50 percent of their time to the doctoral program. The rest including new hires' involvement will range anywhere from 15 to 30 percent. In terms of sheer quantity the size is sufficient for the doctoral program. A comparison with peer institutions reconfirms this observation.

The current faculty is on the whole research oriented with a number of notable publications to their credit. They teach and conduct research in practically all relevant areas of the discipline. There is clearly sufficient research depth and field coverage to warrant offering the Ph.D degree particularly if there is collaboration with USF's cognate departments. The special relationship with History and Sociology will be a positive move. There are, however, recognizable differences among the faculty in productivity and scholarly output. More published research in peer-reviewed journals will only add to the existing record. The Department's recent appointments have strengthened the research profile. This is a positive development will benefit from both new hiring and the establishment of the doctoral program. The overall benefit will be even greater should the University decide to initiate post-doctoral appointments through the Patel Center.

Curriculum

The GIA's curriculum is reasonably extensive as it tries to cover American politics and foreign policy, public law, political behavior, political theory, international relations theory, area studies, state and local government, and administrative behavior. Since several of the courses are concerned with globalization and sustainable communities, the curriculum has the capacity to support the Ph.D program. A few important issues, however, stand out. First, there is a clear need to reorganize the curriculum in order to create Ph.D level courses. These have to be more than simply upgraded MA courses. They need to be conceptually more advanced, methodologically more sophisticated, and research oriented. With the addition of a small number of new faculty members to the GIA, this is quite possible. Second, library resources need additional attention. Although it appears that they are adequate for the purposes at hand, some resources should be directed towards acquisition of relevant research material particularly since specialized doctoral research will be an important part of the program. Third, and as reported elsewhere in this document, there has to be a real effort on the part of the faculty to offer joint courses and collaborate fully with one another. Finally, the program should make

every effort to maintain a quality undergraduate division. Undergraduates should benefit, not suffer, from the introduction of the Ph.D studies

Students

Aside from faculty quality nothing ensures a program's success more than its students. GIA has many stellar classroom teachers who do well in both undergraduate courses and in the MA program. Since undergraduate education is essential to the mission and success of the Department, it is critical that students concerns and needs be met. A doctoral program with strong research orientation should also include the undergraduates as assistants and beneficiaries. More extensive supervised internships (especially through the PA unit) can become part of this endeavor. It is our understanding that the Department is fully aware of this added value and will continue to teach undergraduates effectively. Additional support from the central administration in the form of fellowships and teaching assistantships for the Ph.D students is critical in helping to sustain and expand the doctoral program's quality. We, therefore, urge the administration to find ways to garner resources for student support.

Concluding Remarks on GIA

It is the opinion of the consultants that GIA has made a strong case for its inclusion in the doctoral programs in Global Sustainable Healthy Communities. The Department's program (both conceptually and in terms of implementation) is located in the mainstream discipline. The range of course offerings are indeed impressive. The faculty is research oriented and eager to embark on the doctoral initiative. With additional few hirings and support from central administration, the Department is poised to offer an effective doctoral program that is both unique and sustainable.

HISTORY

The Department of History at the University of South Florida is an excellent unit, and is generally well positioned to add a doctoral program. Its undergraduate program is flourishing with 540 majors, well above average for a department of this size. USF History majors and M.A. students routinely get accepted to prestigious graduate and Ph.D. programs. The Department has a strong, productive faculty dedicated to research and teaching, and characterized by a democratic, collegial culture. Moreover, the History faculty has done considerable work in laying the groundwork for a distinctive doctoral program centering on the theme of global sustainable healthy communities, and has expressed enthusiasm for an interdisciplinary, collaborative approach to the subject.

Faculty

As of the fall of 2007, the Department will have 21 tenured or tenure-track faculty members, slightly more than half of whom are tenured, and anticipates six additional hires by 2009-2010. The faculty have degrees from top research universities, participate in national and international conferences and colloquia, and are active in professional associations. As of the spring of 2007, History faculty had authored 32 books and written 167 book chapters and refereed articles, many in the discipline's most prestigious journals. In addition, in recent years Department members have successfully obtained highly competitive fellowships and awards, including the Harry J. Benda Prize for the best book in Southeast Asian Studies, the Gustavus Myers Outstanding Book Award, and fellowships from the Fulbright Program, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, among others.

Ironically, one measure of the Department's stature is what the Chair has called its number one problem, that of faculty retention. Over the past decade, junior faculty members have left USF for such prestigious research universities as Duke, the University of North Carolina, UCLA, and the University of Minnesota, where they have subsequently gained national recognition. In her 2005 program review of the Department, the external reviewer wrote that, "While all departments can expect a certain amount of movement, the lack of a Ph.D. program is certainly one factor propelling junior faculty to leave USF after establishing their research records."

There exist no obvious concentrations of strength within the Department in terms of field; rather, faculty specializations are dispersed over a wide range of geographical areas, chronological periods, and other disciplinary subfields. The breadth of the Department's coverage should be considered a strength itself in terms of the proposed doctoral program, in that practically all members of the Department will be able to contribute to the unifying theme of the program.

Many members of the History faculty have already engaged in collaborative activities with colleagues from elsewhere in the University, including through the Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Italian Studies program. In addition, beginning in AY 2002-2003, the Department began a lengthy process of self-analysis and discussion concerning the possible implementation of a Ph.D. program, a process that has included the formulation of a departmental position paper, external program review, and an earlier draft of a doctoral proposal. The Department has enthusiastically joined Sociology and Government and International Affairs, along with representatives from other departments, in developing an interdisciplinary initiative organized around the unifying theme of "the study of community-building in a global context." As such, the Department has followed the recommendation of the external reviewer who in 2005 wrote that, "The key to developing a successful new Ph.D. program in the current market is to identify a niche specialty that would attract a small group of highly qualified students who are looking for a focused and dynamic program.'

Curriculum

The existing graduate curriculum is comprehensive and well-conceived, and has ably prepared M.A. students for admission to top flight doctoral programs elsewhere; it also already includes many courses that will be directly relevant to the proposed doctoral program. Yet, the transition to this Ph.D. program will require some changes. The Department needs to continue a process it has already begun, of separating out 4000 and 6000-level courses from each other. To provide more coherence in support of the theme of the proposed program, the faculty needs to reconsider the entire graduate curriculum. It is likely that new courses will be added that are more sophisticated, rigorous, and research-oriented than current M.A. level courses. As noted above, the possibility exists for cross listed, interdisciplinary courses, including an introductory seminar for the doctoral program.

Resources

The Department already is small for a university the size of USF, and for a history department with so many majors, and will need to grow to adequately support a doctoral program. In its hires, the Department should consider appointments at the senior as well as the junior level, to provide immediate national visibility for the program, as well as to supply leadership and experience. The Department should also give careful attention to the workload ramifications of the new program.

According to a recent American Historical Association report, it takes longer to earn a Ph. D. in History than in any other discipline. It is crucial therefore that Ph.D. students receive at least five years of support, including one or two years of non-teaching support for research and writing. While the USF library contains a strong selection of historical journals and monographs, it is anticipated that most doctoral students will consult archives outside of Florida and even the Southeast in conjunction with their research; consequently there needs to be travel support as well.

To ensure that the new doctoral initiative in global sustainable healthy communities fulfills its considerable potential, it is imperative that the links between the History program and its counterparts in Sociology and Government and International Affairs be strengthened wherever possible, without sacrificing the disciplinary quality of each individual program. In addition to the introductory seminar previously mentioned and the capstone seminar, there should be a central administrator, perhaps associated with the Patel Center, who would coordinate the overall initiative. The Patel Center could also offer postdoctoral fellowships to outstanding young scholars in each of the disciplines, to enhance the distinctiveness of the initiative. A speaker series and brown bag lunches where faculty and students discuss their work are among the many possible means to foster a sense of community across the disciplines. There should be incentives or awards for interdisciplinary collaboration, applied for on a competitive basis.

Concluding Remarks on History

The History Department is to be commended for its performance and for its thorough planning in support of the proposed Ph.D. program. Such a record bodes well for the Department's ability to sustain such a program at a high level. However, the Department should recognize that a doctoral program might only modestly impact the Department's retention issue, if at all. Moreover, for such a program to succeed, it is imperative that the University dedicate considerable resources to it, regardless of changes among top administration. Nevertheless, the proposed combined initiative promises to be a pioneering, exciting program that will reflect well upon the individual departments and the University.