

# History

## 2019 Program Review

### MJC Program Review 2019

Modesto Junior College's Program Review process is divided into 3 sections:

- Program Analysis (SWOT Analysis)
- Goal Setting and Activities
- Resource Request

### Program Analysis

#### Internal Strengths

##### **1. What strengths does the analysis of student data reveal?**

Relatively large program with 301 declared majors. History (majors and non-majors) served 7,024 students in 2017-2018 (first census). Ethnic and racial makeup of those that declared history as a major roughly similar for the largest ethnic groups (46.5% Hispanic and 44.5% Whites). Retention rate is 12% higher than MJC's but 1% below regional term-to-term retention rate. Retention rates have remained above 80% for the past 6 years. Increase of 90% in graduation awards between 2015 and 2018 (from 20 to 38 students or 40% and 35% increase year-to-year respectively) No disproportionate impact in completion by ethnicity between White, no-Hispanic (42.1%) and Hispanic (42.1%), the only two groups represented in the data (the other data point is Masked). Significant increase (53%) since 2011 in number of history program completers that transferred to a four-year institution for the first time. The actual number of completers that transferred represents 23% of the total for the entire institution. The Median Regional Annual Salary of people employed in occupations associated with this program is significantly above the county's living wage for a single adult (\$65,000 per year (average) median salary vs. @\$24,000).

##### **2. Are there specific aspects of the program that are exemplary or could serve as a model?**

The history department serves over 7,000 students every year. The number of history awards increased 90% for history vs. 44% for MJC awards over the same period. Adjunct faculty play an important role outside the classroom at the institutional level in governance, Senate, student clubs, and Guided pathways. History department faculty are deeply involved in college governance, Curriculum Committee, Guided Pathways, honors

program, cross-disciplinary collaboration, College Skills, UMOJA, and others. A commitment to student course success, equity, and completion. Its deep understanding of the social-economic conditions that create inequalities in education. Its commitment to social justice. Its commitment to analyzing and, if necessary, revamping its andragogy, course design, and curriculum.

### **3. What do others see as the program's strengths?**

Its ability to produced large number of FTES cheaply for the institution.

### **4. How well are students meeting program learning outcomes, skills, or competencies; and how are they relevant to careers in your discipline or industries for which you help prepare students?**

This is a nested question. Let us analyze them separately

1. Measuring how well students are meeting program outcomes, skills, and competencies is the bane of every academic discipline. How do we know students are learning the outcomes we developed and have become proficient at historical thinking? We dont!

What is learned in college history class is not easily answered with the data available and the course learning outcomes so far developed by the History Department. Although grades are a rough measure of having met overall competencies, they are inadequate to meaningfully assess student learning.

Lacking any institutional research-based approach to understanding how students learn makes it difficult to rethink what and how we teach.

Ultimately, the department is unsure of what and how students are learning, and if they have achieved the expectations we set for them. We are confused and may need help to address what ways of thinking we want students to master and ensuring they are developing those ways of thinking (assessment).

2. How does a history major prepare students to better understand their chosen discipline and how it prepares them for life?

If students are meeting the skills and competencies developed by the department, then history excels at providing students with habits of mind and transferable skills widely used and essential to careers inside and outside academia. In other words, students would be well prepared for the 21st century economy that we are told requires workers to have adaptable skills. The history department understand that the majority of history majors will not pursue history as a profession. However, it is a jumping point for those going into a number of professions, including law, business, governmental work, and finance.

Articulating history-related knowledge and skills to others outside the major is at times an exercise in arguing for the value of a liberal arts education, especially when faced with the careerism presently emphasized and demanded from sectors of our polity. Soft skills in great demand in our society are at the core of the transferable skills developed in the social sciences and the humanities.

## Internal Weaknesses

### 5. What gaps are observed by reviewing the student data?

According to the data provided by MJC there are no equity gaps for completers on the basis of race/ethnicity for Whites or Hispanics (42.1% and 42.1% respectively) the only two groups clearly identified in the data. According the Calpassplus, there the gender equity gap can be met by having one more woman complete the program. The vast majority of completers (57%) are 19-years of age or under, but there is no data in this set to compare it to the average age at the institution.

### 6. What disproportionate gaps need to be addressed?

Before discussing this section, it is important to define what is being measured.

According to Title 5 55502(d) Disproportionate impact in broad terms is a condition where access to key resources and supports or academic success may be hampered by inequitable practices, policies, and approaches to student support or instructional practices affecting a specific group. In addition, Education Code 78221 provides for the tracking eight categories for signs of disproportionate impact in the institutions equity plan.

There is a discrepancy in how MJC and the CCCCCO and others define disproportionate impact. The 80% Rule (1978 Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures and was used in Title VII enforcement by the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission, Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice). The 80% rule states that A selection rate for any race, sex, or ethnic group which is less than four-fifths (4/5) (or eighty percent) of the rate for the group with the highest rate will generally be regarded by the Federal enforcement agencies as evidence of adverse impact, while a greater than four-fifths rate will generally not be regarded by Federal enforcement agencies as evidence of adverse impact. [Section 60-3, Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedure (1978); 43 FR 38295(August 25, 1978)] MJC implemented a higher standard, the 90% rule so how we calculate disproportionate impact internally and how it is calculated externally may cause confusion, unrealistic expectation, and distress for programs and the institution. In addition, MJC chose to compare all data to the highest performing group rather than the average of the groups. The highest performing group is miniscule when compared to the student population in our courses (183 to 6,800 students in the sample). This amplifies a built-in bias which is artificial. The discrepancy in the definition makes our rates hard to compare to other institutions and programs. Asians have a course success rate of 71%.  $9/10$  (90% rule) = 63.9 % and  $4/5$  (80% rule) = 56.8 %. These numbers will be used in analyzing disproportionate impact.

The data provided in the data set is limited to completion rates for history majors and Course Success Rates for all students. There is not data on gender, disabled, veteran status, socio-economic condition of students, etc. that could help refine our assessment.

COMPLETERS: NO DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT for history program completers, according to the data. Race/ethnicity and gender ratios for completers is non-existent or

miniscule according to Calpassplus.

**COURSE SUCCESS RATES:** The history department understands that any difference between groups needs to be analyzed and addressed. However, disproportionate impact has a federal and institutional definition and what follows is based on both. The numbers for this analysis are for ALL students that took a history course.

Blacks have the largest gap in history course success rates at 54% vs. 71% for Asian (it meets MJC's AND the federal definition of disproportionate impact).

Hispanics are the second group with the largest gap in course success rates at 59% vs. 71% for Asian (it meets MJC's but not the federal definition of disproportionate impact).

No other ethnic/racial group meets either MJC's or the federal definition of disproportionate impact, although differences do exist between groups.

### **7. What are areas in which the program could improve? (curriculum, scheduling, modality, other?)**

This is the one-million-dollar question. Historian Anne Hyde wrote in the *Journal of American History* (March 2016) that faculty treat their courses and their classroom as private, sacred spaces. If we are to engage students holistically, the department must strive to work as a department and in making collective decisions that can increase student success, retention, and completion. Academic freedom notwithstanding, the department realizes areas of change and improvement that can only be realized by working as a department rather than a collection of individuals.

1. The history department is re-evaluating its course offering in light of Guided Pathways to better meet student need.
2. The history department understands that we must treat history declared majors in the same way CTE programs cater to their students. To this end, the department is discussing ways to engage and support history majors through a History Club, workshops on the professionalization of history that answers questions such as what you can do with a history degree, and field trips, and possibly, service-learning opportunities in related fields.
3. The history department must establish regular department meetings that discuss and decide the direction of the discipline and strategies for increasing student success and equity across all rubrics. For example, Zero Textbook Costs, better designed assessments and learning course and program learning outcomes, what constitutes a survey level course and appropriate workload for such, etc. are topics that could enhanced student success.
4. The history department is in dire need of two additional full-time historians to better meet student and institutional needs and will advocate for such positions.
5. History department members do a lot of professional development, individually. The

department must establish a mechanism for sharing-out what is learned on state-of-the-art history issues, the latest andragogy, and other.

6. Although the department has stellar adjuncts, only a handful actively participate in many of the department, division, or institutional activity. The full-timers understand the time and financial constraints to do unpaid work, but that is no reason not to develop a more inclusive environment beyond the usual I like and respect adjuncts and invite them to a party. The department and the institution must strive to be more inclusive of the opportunities offered to adjunct.

### **8. Where are there gaps in the program on how students are meeting learning outcomes, skills, or competencies?**

We are not aware of any gaps in meeting learning outcomes, skills, and competencies besides what has been discussed above. The previous section may have address some of these gaps.

## **External Opportunities**

### **9. Where are potential opportunities for expansion, improvement, or new program development?**

There are no external conditions (legislation, outside groups, etc.) that may positively impact the program.

However, increasingly, there is a belief among us that we must we engage with high school social science (history) teachers in order to coordinate efforts to make students transition to college smoother, discuss historical thinking and expectation at the college level.

Understanding what HS teachers are doing and what students have learned, can help us better design our courses and assessments.

### **10. What are some industry or disciplinary trends that could enhance the program?**

The Journal of American History (March 2018) devoted an entire issue to Curricular Conversation beyond the Institution that urges college history instructors to better engage with local schools, especially on history's assessments of learning. In addition, the discipline is engaged in discussing the professionalizing of history majors. The American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians are both cognizant that faculty and department must cast a wider net than has been the tradition.

## **External Threats**

### **11. How are changing resources, technology, employer, or transfer requirements affecting the program's ability to serve students?**

The sustainability of an effective program is dependent on many factors, among them, the number of full-time faculty that can engage on the range of issues of a large program such as ours. History is a graduation requirement both local and for transfer, and as such, preparing students effectively requires faculty that are paid to engage in designing the best

learning experience. At this point, load combined with institutional and community engagement is stretching the department rather thin. The ratio of FT/PT faculty is the lowest (3.5 PT for each FT) for a program that serves 7,000 thousand students per year. Can we get a body in the classroom that can go through the motions of teaching history? Probably. But thats a highly cynical approach to this issue and runs counter to our claims we want the best for our students. The history departments last FT hire was 2007. Where is the equity in that?

Given the loads of most history full-timers, it is a miracle that they are so involved in multiple activities, described above, across the institution. The demands on such a few numbers of FT faculty are a recipe for burnout, disillusionment, and apathy. We understand everyone is shorthanded, but history helps pay the bills by enrolling huge number of students and being a low-cost department (no tractors, expensive machinery, etc.).

**12. What are some current industry or disciplinary trends that could have a negative impact on the program?**

None, maybe. Civic engagement, historical and critical thinking skills and knowledge are essential to citizenship and social justice. Democracy is based on broadly shared beliefs about the nature of our society and how we construct the meaning of freedom (taking into account race, gender, class, etc.) Threats are external to the discipline.

If there is a threat, is that the majority of adjunct college instructors can never hope to achieve the benefits of full-time status as our society moves to a gig economy and considers the benefits of FT employment a detriment, rather than a boon, to educational excellence. Many of our talented part-time instructors have abandoned the college, and even the profession, because adjunct status doesnt pay the bills. The constant replenishment and training of faculty is costly in financial terms, etc.

**13. What other obstacles does the program face?**

The biggest external threat is the careerism mentality that has invaded the social milieu, especially among some politicians, educational innovators, administrators, faculty and others. These forces narrowly construct the meaning and purpose of an education. In essence, a liberal arts education has become a dirty word. The anti-intellectualism and shortsightedness of this approach places programs, especially in the humanities and social sciences, in the crosshairs of both conservatives and liberals for different reasons but with the same outcomes.

**Goal Setting and Activities**

**Goals**

Program Goal	Mission Alignment	Area of Focus
Engage the entire department in redesigning the history	Equity	Program Design

program in light of Guided Pathways in order to increase course success rates, reduce equity gaps and barriers, and develop more effective assessment tools and data.

Engage declared history majors to ensure completion, and so they understand the value and transferable skills learned as a history major. Workforce Needs      Student Support

Increase the level of participation of adjunct faculty in professional development and mentorship opportunities and advocate as a department to increase number of FT faculty. Values      Professional Development

## Activities

Activities	In Support of Goal #	Outcome or Deliverable
Establish regular and frequent department meetings.	Goal #1	Establish regular and frequent department meetings. Evidence of work done to address Goal 1 (agendas, curricular changes, professional dev. activities and how they were shared-out).
Field trips for history students to 4-year college history departments (Stan State, UC Berkeley, East Bay SU, etc.)	Goal #2	Exposure to 4-year colleges (environment, services, etc.) and the historical profession. Such a trip would include conversations with history faculty and students at the institution.
Send 5 adjunct history faculty to the next Organization of American historians conference.	Goal #3	On their return, faculty will deliver to other history faculty presentation(s) on state-of-the-art history and historiography and what the discipline is doing for equity, student learning, andragogy, etc.

## Resource Requests

Category	Request	Activity #	Estimated Cost
Prof. Devel.	Trip for 5 adjunct faculty to Organization of American Historians. Full-time faculty allowed ONLY if not enough PT faculty can go.	3	8000
Prof. Devel.	3 day-long field trips per year for students that declared history as major. Cost dependent on how many students go and form of transportation.	2	2000
Personnel	Two (2) full-time history faculty. The ratio of FT to PT is 1 to 3.5, the largest of any department of this size.	3	200000

According to the data provided by MJC's Dashboard, 2017-18 there were 10,215 students enrolled and in waitlists for history, yet total section capacity was 7,725! All FT faculty teach overloads and adjuncts are maxed out at 60%. The loss in FTES to the institution is substantial, as the number of those that fail to get a course is larger than the total enrollment for entire disciplines. To boot, the productivity of the history department is well above the college average (2016-17 WSCH/FTEF for college was 492.10 and for the history department 609.1, well above the 525 mark that denotes a program that pays for itself). Moreover, the cost per FTES for the college was is \$2,371.25 in 2016-17, that of the history department for the same period was \$1,411.69 (close to a \$1,000 per FTES less than the college). If this were a small program, it would have a minimal impact on the institution as a whole. However, the history department alone produced close to 800 FTES, 5% of the 14,386.25 FTES declared by MJC, placing it among the top 5 FTES producers at the institution (by comparison, it would represent close to 30% of Columbias total FTES in a year). The department cannot adequately serve, nor can it sustain the pace of work imposed by the enormous workload. We understand that increasing course success rates can somewhat reduce demand, but not enough to make a difference to the consequences of relying on a limited adjunct workforce.