1) The Department has had some personal and professional friction that was to be addressed with the assistance of R. Allan Korenik. What progress has been made to address this issue?

**Response:** Jorge Iber and I met with Dr. Korenik to begin a discussion about this friction and to discuss what could be done to address it. Afterwards, I met alone with Dr. Korenik and spoke with him by telephone as a follow up to our previous meeting. In that meeting and in the subsequent telephone conversation, it was decided that there was no reason to meet again unless I thought a meeting was necessary. After our initial meeting, he agreed that the fundamental issue causing friction was the lack of transparency that was evident throughout the department. We discussed this issue at length, and I convinced him of my support for faculty governance and process. I explained the Department’s basic structure that was in place to guarantee process: the Executive Committee (elected by the faculty as a whole) would meet at least on a monthly basis to discuss the day-to-day issues involved in running an academic department and that the faculty would have to approve of any decisions we made before any change could occur or action taken. I have also worked to include all members of the department in the decision-making process, have worked to guarantee that committee assignments be rotated (upon the suggestion of an Executive Committee member set up a spreadsheet to keep track of committee appointments), and have made it a point to discuss the budget and departmental expenses with the faculty.

1) It was pointed out that the program needed to be more clearly defined with an articulated curriculum focus, a process which was also to be addressed with the assistance of Dr. Korenik. Has this issue been addressed and how much has been completed at this time? In addition, there was an issue about the language requirement needing some changes. Has this requirement been addressed and what have been the outcomes?

**Response:** We have revised our language requirement. Formerly, the Department required two languages for a Ph.D. or a language and a research
skill. With this revision, the Department only requires one language for a Ph.D. We have also completely revised our Ph.D. program. We added a number of new required graduate courses to increase our focus on historiography for all of the main areas of study (World, U.S., and European), revised the thematic field that requires a two-person field representing different geographical locations, and established a general requirement for all Ph.D. students who must now take a reading seminar in World History. This spring we will address the process for taking comprehensive exams and vote on the Graduate Studies Committee’s recommendations for revising our MA program. These revisions have allowed us to better define our program goals, to expand our focus on global and comparative studies, and to clearly articulate the expectations we have for our students.

2) Not only is increased funding needed for the TAs, but also more diversification is desired. In addition, a more transparent approach to selecting TAs and GPTIs was suggested. What changes have been made to address these various issues?

I became chair just as the committee was making its recommendation for additional funds for our graduate program, and we have not received any additional funding. As it stands, we have been able to meet the needs of a growing student body with the amount of funding we currently have for TAs and GPTIs but have recently reached our limit. What we have successfully done over the last few years (and this began during Iber’s tenure as chair) is to significantly reduce the number of students our GPTIS are responsible for. Five years ago the typical GPTI taught two sections with about 130 students. Today, the typical GPTI teaches two sections with less than 70 students. The number of students a typical TA is responsible for has also decreased. The typical TA five years ago had about 125 students in his/her four discussion sections. Today, the typical TA is responsible for about 90 students. If the number of undergraduates continues to increase, the numbers of students our TAs and GPTIs (given the current amount of funding) are responsible for will begin to go up again. A larger undergraduate population will make it difficult for us to continue to attract top-quality graduate students, to increase the number of graduate students in our program, and to remain competitive with comparable programs.
The department is also working to increase the diversification of its TAs. We have approached this issue in two ways: 1) have continued to push to diversify our faculty both in terms of the curriculum and in terms of the faculty we hire. 2) we began an ambitious program to recruit graduate students. We have routinely updated the website to make it more user friendly, have produced a poster advertising the program that was sent out to one hundred graduate programs in the Southwest and in Big 12 states, are in the process of completing two other brochures to emphasize departmental specialties, and for the first time the department is organizing a recruitment weekend to bring prospective students to campus. In general we believe that more rigorous recruitment on our part will benefit the program in a number of different ways. Most notably, it will allow us to recruit and retain a diverse graduate student body.

We’ve also worked to make the process for selecting TAs as transparent as possible. This year, the graduate studies committee ranked all the individuals who had applied for fall admission. The department’s Executive Committee then approved of the list and it was turned over to Christina Ashby-Martin. The department hired Ashby-Martin this spring to help teach our U.S. survey courses and to work as the Graduate Studies Coordinator. The Department has long needed additional help in organizing and running the graduate program. Ashby-Martin has been working on the admissions process, coordinating the correspondence with prospective students, and working closely with the graduate school to maintain our files and keep them up to date. She is also responsible for contacting these students about funding opportunities. If all of our offers are not accepted and there is a need to go down the list, Ashby-Martin is required to keep the chair and the director of graduate studies apprised of all changes. Throughout this process, Ashby-Martin has also contacted the faculty to put them in touch with prospective students who share their particular interest/focus in history.

3) The external reviewer especially noted that the Graduate Advisor had an overwhelming responsibility with all of the assigned duties and that additional release time was warranted. Has this concern been addressed and to what extent have you been able to make desired changes?

Response: Jeff Mosher has taken over as the Department’s Director of Graduate Studies. For the past two years he has taught a 1-1 teaching load which is down from the previous director’s teaching load of a 2-1. As noted in the response to
question three, the Department also hired Christina Ashby-Martin to work as our graduate studies coordinator. With the addition of Ashby-Martin, Dr. Mosher can devote most of his time to advising students and to working with the graduate studies committee and the faculty to deal with policy issues and changes. This change has had a significant impact on his experience as director of graduate studies and on the department’s overall experience of running a graduate program. In particular, because of Ashby-Martin, faculty members are kept apprised of the day-to-day issues affecting our students, the program, and the university. The addition of a graduate studies coordinator, we feel, will allow us to put more time and energy into recruitment and retention with the goal of increasing the quality of our students and their numbers.