

TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN HISTORY AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY-PUEBLO

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I. SUMMARY

Colorado State University-Pueblo has submitted a proposal for a Master of Arts Degree in History to be offered at Colorado State University-Pueblo, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Masters of Arts Degree in History program is to provide students with the general knowledge of history and historical methodology; introduce students to the theoretical works that serve as the foundation of historical scholarship; prepare students through training in communication and in research methods to gain knowledge of certain areas of history; and to prepare students to do independent studies, and engage in critical thinking in history. In addition the M.A. in history will provide K-12 teachers in the region the opportunity to expand their knowledge and improve their teaching of American history.

This proposal is the result of overwhelming student demand and a 1.7 million Teaching Traditional American History grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

The Board of Governor's for the Colorado State University System approved the Masters of Arts in History at Colorado State University- Pueblo on February 9, 2009.

II. BACKGROUND

The following is summarized from the Colorado State University-Pueblo proposal for the Master of Arts Degree in History.

Two main factors have brought about this proposal: overwhelming student demand and a \$1.7 million Teaching Traditional American History (TAH) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, the history department at Colorado State University-Pueblo has participated in the Southeast Colorado History project since 2004. Three previous TAH grants, especially the most recent grant, spurred Colorado State University-Pueblo to respond to the growing demand to provide these grant classes as stepping stones for a graduate program. Many of the prospective students would otherwise have to travel outside the Pueblo area to pursue a history graduate degree. The most recent grant from the U.S. Department of Education can pay for as many as ninety teachers to earn their Master of Arts at Colorado State University-Pueblo over five years if the institution can make this graduate program permanent.

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT:

The Master of Arts in History supports the role and mission of Colorado State University-Pueblo. The statutory mission of CSU-Pueblo is "to be a regional, comprehensive

university, with moderately selective admissions standards. The university shall offer a broad array of baccalaureate programs with a strong professional focus and firm grounding in the liberal arts and sciences. The university shall also offer selected masters-level graduate programs."C.R.S. 23-31.5-101.

EVIDENCE OF NEED FOR THE PROGRAM:

The American Historical Association (AHA) found in 2004 that master's degrees were the fastest growing degree in the United States, yet master's degrees in history fell behind with a 16% decrease. The AHA attributes this decline to reduces numbers of undergraduate history majors. However, over the last eight years the number of history majors have slowly increased from 70 to 150 at CSU-Pueblo.¹

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT DEMAND:

The Southeast Colorado History Project in combination with Grant Design Concepts, Inc. (GDC) conducted a survey about interest in the master's program. A website was set up where potential students could answer questions designed to determine their interest in the degree, desired objectives, expectations of work load, finances and other related issues. This site was active from September 18-December 21, 2007 and received about 90 responses: of 77% who expressed interest in the program, 73% said they were likely to enroll². Responses to open ended questions indicated many participants welcomed the opportunity to continue their education close to home at CSU-Pueblo; many explained that they failed to continue their education due the lack of a local graduate program. In addition, Colorado State University-Fort Collins advises that they are unable to offer all the necessary classes at Ft. Collins and can permit students to begin in Pueblo and finish in Fort Collins.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The Department staff has reviewed this proposed program to ensure that it meets the State's performance measures outlined in C.R.S. 23-5-129.6. The program meets all performance measures set forth by the state.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Commission approve the Master of Arts in History to be offered by Colorado State University-Pueblo.

V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. 23-5-129.6

VI. ACCOMPANYING MATERIALS

The program proposal materials are attached.

¹ University of Southern Colorado, *Fact Book*, September 2001, accessed January, 2008.

² Taken from CSU-Pueblo degree program proposal document.