

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 1, 2019

TO: Associate Dean Sarah Nielsen, CLASS

FROM: Chair Bridget Ford, Department of History

RE: Probationary Tenure-Track Hire Request, Academic Year 2020-2021

The Department of History requests a tenure-track hire, at the assistant professor level. We offer the following program data discussion and resource request.

PROGRAM DATA

Discussion of Trends & Reflections

Notable Trends:

From 2014 to 2018, the Department of History awarded between 35 and 47 bachelor's degrees yearly, and between 4 and 13 master's degrees. Our number of earned bachelor's degrees peaked in AY 2016-2017. The number of history majors shows some slight variation over those years, with highs in 2014 and 2016 (135 and 132 majors, respectively) and a low in Fall 2018 of 112 majors. Over this period of time, our majors have grown increasingly diverse, with no obvious ethnic or racial majority. By 2018, white students made up 35% of our majors, Hispanic/Latino students 33%, and Asian students our next largest group, at 10%. African American, American Indian, and International students together made up nearly 10% of our majors as of Fall 2018, and students reporting multiple racial backgrounds or declining to state made up another 13% of our majors. More broadly, the proportion of URM students continues to grow while that of non-URM diminishes among our majors.

The Department of History conducted four successful job searches in the last seven years, and yet growth among our faculty ranks has been elusive. We had eight tenure-track faculty members in 2013, and at this point, we remain at the same number despite almost yearly job searches. This is due to two retirements and two separations over this period of time. With these two separations, our tenure-track faculty diversity has also diminished.

Our FTES averages have remained fairly steady in the last five years, ranging between 413.5 in 2013 and 427.5 in 2018. We had a high of 437.7 FTES in 2014 due to the use of "megasections" as a means to grapple with the Great Recession's budgetary consequences for the CSU. In Fall 2019, though, our FTES dipped to 385.42, even with 99.5% of our class seats filled. The Department of History currently has 1,911 students enrolled in Fall 2019 courses. Our student-faculty ratio reached a low of 29.2 in 2016, but has climbed since then to 32.6 in 2018.

Reflections on Trends and Program Statistics:

Semester conversion in Fall 2018 makes it difficult to extrapolate definitive patterns, although we are closely watching the number of our majors and their engagement and success with our transformed curriculum.

Two phenomena, though, appear at odds with each other. Even as our majors become more diverse, it appears challenging for CSU East Bay to retain diverse tenure-track faculty in our current Bay Area economic conditions. The department's first tenure-track African American historian, a scholar of California's uniquely diverse late 20th century political history, departed for Texas State University after two years, citing the high cost of living among her reasons. Dr. Khal Schneider, a scholar of Native American history, moved to Sacramento State for a similar reason.

Two senior professors, Dr. Nancy Thompson, and Dr. Dee Andrews, have also retired or joined the Faculty Early Retirement Program. We therefore feel we are treading water to an extent, even as we have great ambition for a uniquely forward-looking history program and curriculum. Each faculty retirement or separation of course demands a retrenchment and redistribution of duties, and it becomes challenging to recruit for the wonderful programs we created with semester conversion when our tenure-track faculty ranks shift substantially every year.

REQUEST FOR RESOURCES

Request for Tenure-Track Hires

Given the foregoing, the Department of History hopes to conduct a search similar to the one filled in 2017 by Dr. Casey Nichols, who departed last Spring after two years at East Bay. Dr. Nichols developed popular courses in African American history and the history of social justice and reform in her brief time here, and students were drawn to her California and the World (HIST 382) history course. A number of students have expressed disappointment that Dr. Nichols departed East Bay.

We are therefore hopeful that we might be able to conduct a similar tenure-track (assistant professor rank) search to the one undertaken in 2016-2017, which focused on diversity and diasporas, with an emphasis on African American history. We received many extraordinary applicants for this position, and we hope that would again be the case.

This future hire would teach courses supporting two main concentrations within our major degree program, "Migration and Globalization" and "Social Justice and Citizenship." Additionally, the successful candidate would contribute to our public history concentrations, in both our undergraduate and graduate programs (namely, HIST 402, Introduction to Public History, and HIST 642, Public History Practicum).

Tentative position description:

HISTORIAN OF AMERICAN DIVERSITY AND DIASPORAS/COMMUNITY

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HISTORY: The History Department at California State University East Bay seeks a specialist in the history of diversity and diasporas, with teaching and research interests in communities of color in any period of U.S. history from Atlantic origins to the present. Candidates with expertise in African/African American history, and with interest in

developing public history programs and curricula involving the local community, will be given special consideration. A tenure track hire must show a willingness to develop upper division courses appropriate to his/her research specialty, prepare lower division courses in World Civilization or in U.S. History, support the department's core offerings in historical writing, research, and historiography, and teach in the graduate program. Preference will be given to scholars who have experience in the methodology and practice of Public History. A Ph.D. in history or related field is required.

In terms of the College, this hire would contribute to CLASS's strong presence in community engagement curriculum on campus and courses addressing diversity and social justice. This hire could also be an ideal point of collaboration for the departments within the proposed School of Global Humanities.

In terms of the University, this hire addresses key institutional learning outcomes: applying knowledge of diversity and multicultural competencies to promote equity and social justice in our communities; and working collaboratively and respectfully as members and leaders of diverse teams and communities. It would also augment the collective desire on campus to create a more diverse and robust program of community engagement on campus and fortify CSUEB's relationship with the local community and area historical and cultural institutions.

Finally, in terms of our Department, this proposed search fulfills pressing needs:

1. Curricular: A scholar the addresses issues of diversity in US History with a global perspective, to tie US curriculum into the global framework we find essential; in addition, we need a scholar that has interest and experience in developing community engagement programs through the study of history that will bring CSUEB students out of the classroom into the local community to hone their collaborative skills and fine tune approaches to public history;
2. Student Demand: A scholar with advanced skills in public history and community involvement. Our Public History program has gained enough traction in both the BA and MA program that students want more diversity in offerings, integrated throughout the history curriculum;
3. University Mission: Especially important for sustaining academic quality, campus inclusion, enrollment growth, and quest for distinction. But more so, this is a position that is thinking forward, developing new, exciting approaches within traditional fields, with an eye towards innovation in teaching and learning, as well as the institutional learning outcomes and shared mandates the address multiculturalism, social justice, community engagement and innovation in higher education.
4. Potential to contribute to our growing (and renewed) California history emphasis: This coming January, the *California History* journal, a long-standing scholarly publication, will return to CSU East Bay. Mary Ann Irwin, a lecturer in the Department of History, will serve as the editor of this journal. She has many wonderful and creative plans for issues, and we plan to embed some of the critical work and design of the journal into our public history program and courses. We can envision a further elevation of our California history curriculum and expertise with this hire. We would be happy to adjust the job description as well, in order to lean into this new emphasis.