The report of the Department of History and the Chair’s response to it provide an excellent foundation for the academic review process. We thank the Chair, Dr. Hugh Hudson, and the department for their efforts, and we especially commend the self study committee and its chair, Dr. Tim Crimmins, for the considerable thought and time they devoted to this important process.

Academic program review provides us with an opportunity to highlight a department’s major accomplishments, set goals, and focus attention on current concerns and challenges. This is the department’s second cycle of review. Its first review, completed in 2003, resulted in an ambitious list of goals and the provision of resources to help meet them. We are pleased to note that the department met many of its goals. Since the last review, the faculty has been highly productive in its scholarly achievements. It has been a leader in undergraduate education with the history major growing by 16% and its graduation rate almost doubling. The World History Program has a strong national reputation. The Public History and Historical Preservation Programs have developed substantially since the last review. The TEEMS program, which has been a productive route to alternative certification for high school social studies teachers, has made an important contribution to the university’s professional education program. Not all our goals have already been reached. For example, despite the active faculty recruitment efforts over the past five years, the department’s tenure track faculty has grown only from 20 to 21. Nevertheless, we are highly encouraged by the department’s trajectory, and we are looking forward the results of this cycle of program review.

The upcoming visit by the external review team provides the department and the Dean’s Office with an excellent opportunity to review the progress of the Department and to sharpen our vision for its future. To this end, we will focus here on the goals and objectives put forward by the department in its self study and leave decisions about new resources until the action plan is formulated during later steps in the program review process. In general, the Dean’s Office is pleased with the direction that is plotted in the department’s goals and objectives and agrees with many of the recommendations in the report. In particular, we strongly support the plans to review and reshape the graduate program, with particular emphasis on the Ph.D. program. We also note that the college and university have actively been addressing the faculty salary issues in History, and in the college as a whole, within the constraints of the University of System of Georgia. We are cautiously optimistic that the university will continue to prioritize this goal and provide additional resources so that we can continue to make merit-based market equity adjustments to base salaries. Finally, we fully agree that the department faces serious space constraints, and we are optimistic that there will be a short-term plan to move the department to more adequate space by the Fall 2008. Eventually the department will be housed in the new Humanities Building that is now being planned.
In addition to the issues mentioned above, we would like to focus on two matters where we think that further information and analysis would be particularly useful as we plan for the department’s future. We hope that the external review team will be able to help us gain greater clarity concerning these matters.

First, we are particularly concerned by the challenges the department is facing as it expands its faculty ranks. We are planning to continue to recruit new tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty to meet the growth in our programs. We would appreciate suggestions about how best to plan for this expansion, how to match it with our research and teaching foci, and how to provide adequate support for new faculty.

Second, we strongly agree that the Department should refine its graduate program. The self study report details some of the issues concerns, particularly related to graduate course offerings and teaching loads. It would be helpful to have input about the structure of the Ph.D. program.

The Dean’s Office again congratulates the Department on its development since the last academic program review, and thanks the Department of History for this report. Its progress bodes well for the future. The Dean’s Office looks forward to the external reviewers’ visit and to working with the Department on an action plan that will make their goals achievable in the next five years.

Lauren B. Adamson, Dean

MaryAnn Romski, Associate Dean