

November 30, 1943.

Dean H. K. Newburn
College of Liberal Arts

Dear Dean Newburn:

In response to your letter of September 21, 1943, the Department of History presents the enclosed Report.

This Report drafted by the head of the Department was discussed, revised and adopted in a meeting of the faculty of history.

Three tables are appended to give objectively the work of the Department in past years.

A Digest of the Report is enclosed to give some general idea of the nature of the Report.

If you should like to confer with us about any phase of the Report, I will welcome the opportunity. It may be that we have failed in some respects to deal with items you have in mind.

Sincerely yours,

W. T. Root

REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY IN
RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST OF DEAN NEWBURN.

I

Departmental planning should proceed on the assumption "that no major change can be made in the support of the College as a whole". In short, there is the warning that the College budget in general has reached a continuing level. A departmental budget will be revised in response to a real need, but it is suggested that before calling upon the College exchequer for "additional funds", a department should try to find a workable margin within its own allotment. Perchance that can be accomplished by refusing shelter to the weak in personnel and thus salvage a sum to raise the salaries of the superior. The result would be a smaller but better faculty. The elimination of the weak and better pay to the competent is of course devoutly to be desired.

One may dare to query whether the budget of one college in the University stands silently alone. Does not the budgetary problem have a totality within the University as a whole? It may possibly be that if budgetary adjustments among the various colleges be given full attention, the Liberal Arts College may not be restricted to its present level. One is inclined to wonder whether the L. A. College has received support commensurate with its needs.

No one will dare to deny that the L. A. College is the very heart of the whole academic order. The obvious needs no discussion.

A vast majority of its youth go forth directly into life and labor with no further formal education. The heaviest sort of obligation rests upon this college in the preparation of youth for a wholesome

social order. In addition, the college prepares many who enter the professional schools, such as Law, Medicine, or Graduate disciplines. Musing on these things, it brings cold comfort to think that the L. A. College, the very center of education, must in general go forth under the assumption "that no major change can be made in the support of the College as a whole." Create "additional funds" by eliminating the weak. One wonders what will happen when the college is inundated by post-war students and confronted by a reduced staff and limited budget. The result: greater mass production and an inferior product.

II

Perhaps an honest search will reveal evidence that a department can find "additional funds" within its own budget.

There may be over-staffed departments; a plethora of highly specialized courses to satisfy the vanity of a specialist; a duplication or overlapping of courses among departments. In consequence specialized courses and an expanded personnel were followed by an expanded budget. It meant that when the faculty pressed also for better salaries, it was met with the reasonable response that an expansion of courses and faculty neutralized the demands for a higher salary scale.

If there be proven weaknesses in the teaching staff, they should be eliminated. But it so happens that in the process of time and some years of teaching a man has been raised to the professorial class. Then he is of an age and position that make it impracticable to begin another career. Administrators and colleagues are unwilling to cut him off from his post. The only

no new courses should be added to those who show distinction in some line of academic work, teaching, writing, publication.

One cardinal sin of recent American education has been the failure to control the subjects of the curriculum. Specialization has its great values, but colleges have allowed themselves to become victims of their success. To prevent the undue expansion of courses within a department or the overlapping or duplication of courses among departments, there is a real need of some regulating agency, a controlling device to check the unfortunate play of centrifugal forces among self-regarding departments. It is proposed as a means to that end that a committee representing related departments, such as History and the Social Studies, should be empowered to sit in judgment on new courses a department desires to offer. Before the bar of this committee a department would be required to plead the justification of new offerings.

III

Reviewing the past, the budget and personnel can be presented objectively in cold figures. Over a period of twenty-five years (1915-1940) the budget has remained generally at the same level, except for the years when the depression called for reduction. During this period the number on the staff has remained the same from year to year and yet the number of students enrolled in the various courses has increased as the student body in the College has grown in size. It can hardly be claimed that the department is over-expanded in personnel. (Chart I appended presents these facts in hard statistics.)

A three-fold obligation rests upon the faculty. The College exists primarily for the training of undergraduates. In graduate training the University ranks high in the number of graduates. Bigness however, is not greatness. What is far

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greater is the excellence of its graduates. And it should be said that the faculties of the Liberal Arts and Graduate Colleges are in large measure identical in personnel. Finally, an obligation rests upon the faculty to explore and define the frontiers of knowledge by patient research and scholarly production. A University whose faculty is not actively engaged in creative intellectual tasks gradually sinks into mediocrity.

The faculty of history, in spite of a small personnel, a limited budget, and a growing clientele of students, has not fallen short in any of its triple obligations. With no academic protection, but in a competitive field, it has more than held its own in the number of students attracted to the courses in history. It is absurd to find history bracketed in Group II in competition with such utilitarian or professional subjects as Commerce, Education, Home Economics and Applied Psychology.

The burden of graduate work has been heavy for small staff. Within the past fifteen years (1925-1940) the department has sent out 381 bearing the M. A. degree and 69 crowned with the Ph.D. We hasten to remark that quality is far more to be desired than quantity. We may be pardoned for a bit of pride in the quality of our Ph.D's. The appended statement (II) presents a fair picture of the various posts they hold in Universities and colleges over the land, their record as productive scholars, and the fellowships they have held.

The faculty of history has not been wanting in research and publication. Rather than elaborate on this point here, the appended list (III) should convey a fair picture of what the

members of the department have published in the past few years and what is now in progress.

No one will question that the Summer Session has become an integral and essential part of the University educational order. One need not embroider on this point. The faculty of history has given generously of its time, energy and scholarship to carry on a well balanced program. And it must be said that the burden in summer is far heavier than in the regular academic year. The number of graduate students enrolled in a summer average about 100 for the years 1935-1940. Graduate training in summer with such a number involves frequent conferences and many hours in the direction and reading of numerous theses.

Added to these manifold duties and burdens, some members of the staff have given generously of their time and knowledge to the wholesome enterprise of speaking to audiences throughout the state or reaching the public through the radio. In this there is a two-fold advantage: keeping alive the interest of the public in its University and furthering the process of adult education.

IV

On the question of course offerings, it has not been the purpose and plan of the department to schedule various highly specialized courses in many fields of history. The department offers undergraduate courses of a more or less breadth in a few staple fields. There are courses of the survey type in American English, Modern European and Ancient and Mediaeval history. For the period 1935-40 an annual average of 600 students were enrolled in these general courses.

In advanced courses we offer certain staple fields as early American or colonial history, history of the West, Economic and Social history of the United States, and a few more specialized and yet significant courses, such as American Foreign Relations, American Constitutional history, and History of the South. In the field of Europe there are courses in Mediaeval Civilization, the XVII and XVIII centuries, and several phases of more modern history. The department also provides courses in the British Empire and several fields of English history. Prerequisites are required before entering advanced courses. Some courses alternate from year to year. For the years 1935-1940 the average number of students enrolled in advanced courses was 600.

v

To attract scholars and to develop scholarship, the policy and atmosphere of a university must be congenial to those ends. Many colleges and universities recognize these desirable goals by providing schemes of several kinds to give impulse to creative and productive scholarship. A Report of 1931 founded upon the replies of 166 institutions of higher education reveals that a large number pursued the usual sabbatical plan. A few conceded a year on full pay but required the grantee to pay a substitute, and a few granted leave and pay on the basis of individual merit. The University of Iowa, strangely enough, has no scheme.

Fortunately Iowa does not prescribe a fixed teaching load. For those engaged in research there is a sliding scale of reduction in teaching. So far so good, but the good is not enough. The situation is perplexed by the emphasis upon the Summer Session.

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provision should be made for a proportionate leave during the academic year with pay to further a significant piece of research.

VI

Looking to the future of the department there are several plans presented for consideration.

(a) There is the matter of providing instruction in fields of history of increasing importance which now are not cared for. Latin America is becoming an area of greater significance. There is no desire to provide graduate work in this field. Other universities are well-equipped in that respect. But there should be a general course and some advanced work in this field. It is not suggested that a scholar especially trained in this field be engaged to give full time to the history of Latin-America. In the interest of bringing departments together, a consummation much to be desired, it would be of advantage to seek the services of one who is well trained both in Spanish literature and Spanish history. If such a person there be, he could serve two departments.

(b) And similarly in the case of ancient Greece and Rome, there is no thought of specialization in this field. But it may be possible to find a scholar who could carry courses in Classical literature and also offer courses in Ancient history. Again departmental lines would tend to be softened.

(c) There is one field of the greatest significance which should be given the full attention it deserves. That is the History of the Far East. There can be no doubt that the concerns of the countries bathed by the Pacific are of the most vital

concern to the United States and to the world as a whole. The unity of the English-Speaking peoples has been brought into clearer and bolder relief as a great decisive factor in world affairs. In this field the department is well provided with courses, general and special. That is as it should be. But we hasten to say that the vital interests of the English-Speaking people are intimately bound up with the affairs of the Far East. And since the United States is bound to play an increasing part in world affairs, the responsibility rests upon the University to make such arrangements as it is earnestly hoped will be made. It is earnestly hoped that the Department is privileged to add to its staff a scholar in Far Eastern history.

VII

As time goes on and certain members of the staff become increasingly immersed in research and relief from teaching is granted, there will be fewer full time men to carry the requisite burden of teaching. This is well evidenced in the case of Professor Thornton. He is charged officially with preparing a major history of the University for the centennial celebration in 1947. In addition to carrying a considerable burden of teaching both in the regular year and the summer and finishing a study of the Chautauqua Movement soon to be published, he has made considerable progress in preparing the University History. It is greatly hoped that this study will be in print for 1947. It will mean that Professor Thornton will have to be relieved in part of his teaching schedule and academic chores to enable him to finish the University history on time. There is the case of Professor Palzer who is editing the Mississippi Valley Historical

Review, one of the leading journals of history. The University has recognized what it means to the scholarly prestige of the University to have the editorship of this journal on the campus by granting a yearly subsidy of \$1500 to support the enterprise. Professor Felzer has been relieved of some teaching to compensate for the time given to his editorial duties. Professor Clark's teaching schedule has been lightened to give him more time to devote to his study of European diplomacy for which he has gathered a wealth of source material from various foreign archives.

VIII

The freshmen and sophomores in the general survey courses should be under the teaching and direction of the ablest men in the staff. The discussion groups should be in charge of mature and qualified instructors. The present system of placing the discussion groups in the hands of graduate students is not conducive to the best teaching. Post-doctoral teaching fellowships might well be created to bring together from the University and elsewhere a number of promising young men who would welcome the opportunity to begin their teaching careers and continue their work in history and cognate fields. Such a scheme would have the added advantage of making possible a greater amount of association between the student and the qualified men in the field of history.

IX

One of the heaviest injunctions laid upon the Liberal Arts College is to send from its portals a student product with a well-rounded education. That is the constituent purpose of the College. The injunction is not well honored in performance. The College

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genius to contribute to the total intellectual and cultural character of the student. But instead of working at cross purposes, youth has been warped from its traditional purpose of making youth to make the whole man. Centrifugal forces have shattered the unity of knowledge into fragments. The evils of the wide elective system and the growth of aggressive departments each firm in the belief of the virtues of its particular field of study, have made education a disorganized procedure. A bit here, a bit there, from various enticing departmental bargain counters, and the student goes forth into life crowned with a bachelor's degree but possessed of a fractional knowledge difficult to put together into a rational pattern. One of the greatest problems a new liberal education has to face is to reaffirm the centrality of human experience.

No one department should have a monopoly of academic patriotism. A department is not an end in itself; it is nothing more than a means to a great end and that is the character and quality of the students sent forth. Each department has something of its own genius to contribute to the total intellectual and cultural character of the student. But instead of working at cross purposes, departments should understand well that they should collaborate one with the other to give a large and wholesome measure of unity in the task of educating the youth.

In the light of this philosophy the Department of History proposes the following avenues by which it can contribute in alliance with other departments to the process of educational integration.

The History of Western Civilization

The Sub-Committee on history presented to the Steering Committee a course on "Western Civilization in the core curriculum.

This proposal came not from the department of history. It is significant to note that it was the result of the long and mature deliberations of men from various departments representing the College as a whole and with minds upon the student as the main consideration. The sub-committee represented English, Philosophy, Economics, Sociology, Art, Education, Romance Language, Medicine, History.

The sub-committee agreed on the principle that such a course was basic in Liberal education and should be required. It is not the purpose here to elaborate on the Report and to embroider upon the advantages of such a course in the process of providing a liberal education for the student. It was held that the responsibility of the course should rest upon the head of a competent professor of history and that he should have the counsel and assistance of a small group of faculty men from several departments. Here is a clear step onward in the path of integration in the educational process.

A Program of Advanced Study in American Civilization.

It is fair to say that as college curricula have been fashioned many Americans in their formal education have been cut off from a clear understanding of the temper and genius of their own country. The aim of an Advanced Study in American Civilization would be to lead students to an appreciation of our civilization as a living expanding culture with established principles and traditions, and to an understanding of its significance among other world civilizations.

The day is here to shatter the crust of parochialism in

America. Americans have lived within a closed circle, not by the growth of knowledge, but by the continuance of ignorance. As a result educated Americans have been unwilling to assume a responsibility for a world in which they have had a great share in the making. It is clear as crystal that America will be unable to shoulder the responsibilities as a mighty member of the United Nations of the World without a more intimate knowledge of their own civilization and a broader understanding of other nations.

More specifically students should be made aware of several distinctive developments in our history; the way in which ideas and institutions originating in Europe have been transferred to this continent; the ways in which these institutions and ideas have been modified and adapted to our needs; the sources and nature of the unique contributions which America has made to world civilization; the tremendous influence which these contributions have exercised abroad.

To carry out this program it is not necessary to create another school or department. Heaven forbid! Departments need only to cooperate. The program can be realized only if the subject is approached from as many different angles and directions as possible. It would mean that the social studies and humanities should work together. Authorities in the several fields are now available in various departments. A sufficient number of courses in America and allied fields are in existence.

Briefly the scheme of organization and procedure might be as follows: (1) a student enters the Program when he is admitted

to one of the departments as a major and follows the program of that department; (2) during the last two years he should take at least four courses representing the following approaches, Historical, institutional, philosophic, literary, artistic; (3) he should be required to write a thesis on a pertinent subject, for creative scholarship on a student's initiative is an essential phase of education for a talented youth; (4) students in the Program should be required to take a comprehensive examination.

These proposals have good precedent. This sort of program is carried on at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Williams, Smith.

This scheme will draw together men from various lines of intellectual effort and engage them in a significant integrated enterprise. It is hoped the Dean will create a committee to consider and report on this proposal.

Honors Course

The College has a plain duty in taking seriously the problem of dealing in a special manner with students of superior intellectual talents. It is an obligation not well met in times gone. If democracy means a free field and no favors, it violates the principle to treat a talented youth in the same unleavened lump of ordinary and mediocre clay. Lock step or assembly line production will not produce leaders. And a democratic regime stands greatly in need of educated leaders.

The Department of History displays a catalogue statement that it offers an Honors Course. Humbly we confess that little has been done to give it the breath of life. There are not enough hours in the day for a small staff busily preoccupied

to implement such a course.

An Honors course should be an essential measure in the College as a whole. It should be one of the major problems of the College and its departments. Inherent in Honors work is the play of a spirit of cooperation among departments.

Teacher Training.

Every year a goodly number of students set forth from liberal arts to take up teaching. In truth the College is in part a teacher training institution. A serious obligation rests upon the College. Out of the high schools come those who enter college and the conclusion draws itself that the quality of the entering youth rests upon the quality of those we prepare to teach.

It is questioned whether we have taken this responsibility in good faith. The present practise does not incite enthusiasm. View the picture. A prospective teacher takes certain specified courses in education to qualify for a teacher's certificate. He also earns a minimum of credits in academic subjects he may offer to teach. These requirements have become somewhat mechanical. No matter how low the quality of work in the academic or pedagogic subjects, no matter how deficient in personal attributes, the certificate is granted and the recipient sets forth to teach.

Halting and fumbling steps have been taken to solve the problem. But there remains much to be done to cull out those unfit to teach on the grounds of intelligence and personality. The colleges of liberal arts and education fall far short of proper leadership when it fails to exercise careful supervision in the training and selection of teachers for the schools. It should be

an order of important business for a joint committee of the two colleges, Liberal Arts and Education, to investigate, propose and report on the subject of adequate teacher preparation.

X

In the matter of the needs of the Department in the physical sense, the first desideratum is a Library. Since the matter of a new Library is under consideration and progress is being made, the subject needs no further discussion. There is the question of adequate funds to purchase historical materials. These collections should include not only the books needed for teaching purposes, but source materials to build up the collections necessary to the research scholar in his particular field of study. The money apportioned to the Library for purchases should be increased.

There is needed additional offices to accommodate the history staff. There is also needed some additional furniture for the history office and the offices of the several members of the staff in the way of filing cabinets.

Respectfully submitted

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

DIGEST OF THE REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY TO
DEAN NEWBURN (December 1, 1943)

- I. Some remarks based upon the caution that planning should proceed on the "assumption that no major changes can be made in financial support of the College as a whole." The query whether the College receives budgetary support commensurate with its needs.
- II. That an honest search may reveal certain ways to find "additional funds" within the departmental budget. There may be an overexpansion of both staff and courses. A solution of the problem of weak personnel is to exercise great caution in recruiting new men to the faculty and to give promotion only to those who show distinction in some line of academic work. To prevent an undue expansion of courses in a department or the overlapping of courses, it is proposed that a committee representing related departments should judge the fitness of any new course offered by a department.
- III. A review of the department, its courses, its work, etc. Tables are appended to show: (1) the fact that the personnel of the department has remained at the same number, the budget at the same figure, and that the number of students registered in history courses has greatly increased for 1915-1940; (2) to show that the burden of graduate work has grown heavier during

during 1935-1940; (3) to show what progress has been made by the faculty in research and publication.

IV. A general review of the policy of the department in offering courses. It points out the several offerings in general survey courses and for advanced work has offered courses only in a few staple fields.

V. This has to do with providing a sabbatical year for the faculty to stimulate creative scholarship and freedom for the broadening effects of travel. It points out the serious effect of the summer session on research.

VI. Here is proposed that a man be selected to teach Latin American History and Literature, and one to instruct in Classical History and Literature. The advantage of relating departments and subjects is obvious.

Because of the growing and vital importance of Far Eastern History a man be added to the history staff for that purpose.

VII. The danger that the history staff will be understaffed as various members become more engrossed in research.

VIII. The present practise of placing discussion groups of freshmen and sophomore students in charge of graduate assistants leaves much to be desired. It is proposed that such groups might well be placed in the charge of post-doctoral teaching fellows.

- IX. To bring about the integration of departments and to provide for better instruction several plans are proposed.

To put into the Core Curriculum a general course on Western Civilization to be in charge of a competent member of the history staff assisted by the advice of a member representing allied departments.

A Program of Advanced Study in American Civilization which would provide for a fuller understanding of American principles and contributions. Such a program calls for the cooperation of departments.

Honors Work for the superior students should receive full attention. It is a matter which concerns the College as a whole. Inherent in Honors Work is cooperation among departments.

In the case of Teacher Training, the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Education should devise plans for the better training and selection of prospective teachers.

- X. A plea for more funds to purchase books and other materials for the library. This is urged both for teaching and research purposes. Additional offices for the history staff are needed; also a few things in the way of furniture.

CHART I
First Semester

	<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>LA Enrollment</u>
1924-25		988	\$32,100	3270
1925-26	9	847	35,000	3178
1926-27	9	964	32,000	3234
1927-28	8	921	33,000	3238
1928-29	8	808	30,000	3174
1929-30	9	821	34,000	3032
1930-31	8	828	34,000	2980
1931-32	8	870	35,000	2620
1932-33	8	928	31,000	2281
1933-34	8	1029	29,000	2625
1934-35	8	1250	31,000	3205
1935-36	8	1351	29,000	3300
1936-37	8	1410	29,000	3596
1937-38	8	1222	31,000	3472
1938-39	8	1305	31,000	3457
1939-40	9	1321	33,000	3653

STATEMENT II

Records of Ph.D's in History

- I. The Ph.D's in history from Iowa are to be found on faculties of Universities and Colleges well scattered through the country.

They are to be found on the faculties of the larger and prominent institutions, such as Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, University of Illinois, Cornell, Miami (2), Iowa (3), Pittsburgh (2), Ames (2), University of Missouri, University of Maryland, University of Delaware, Louisiana State, Marquette, Creighton, University of Arkansas, University of Southern California (2) University of New Hampshire, Montana State.

They are in distinctive small colleges, Illinois Wesleyan, Coe, Augustana, Yankton, Hamline, Luther, Allegheny, Park, Bradley, etc. They are to be found in many Teachers Colleges from Albany, New York and Washington D. C. to the state of Washington.

- II. They have been the recipients of Fellowships, such as Rhodes, Guggenheim, American-Scandinavian (2), Carnegie (2), Roberts (3), Harrison (University of Pennsylvania), and others.
- III. From a recent and careful survey of the Ph.D's in history from the leading Universities for the period 1926-1935, Iowa Ph.D's stand tenth in the number of books published, fourth in the number of articles published, eighth in the number of reviews published in leading journals, and tenth in the number of Ph.D's granted.