27 April 2015

TO: Tom Broman, Chair, History of Science

FROM: John Karl Scholz, Dean

RE: Completion of L&S Review of History of Science Programs:

- History of Science, Medicine, and Technology (BA, BS)
- History and History of Science, Medicine, and Technology (BA, BS) – joint program with History
- Master of Arts – History of Science, Medicine, and Technology
- Doctor of Philosophy – History of Science, Medicine, and Technology

On February 3 and 17, 2015, the L&S Academic Planning Council considered the materials submitted in fulfillment of the mandated review of the academic programs offered in the History of Science Department. These materials included the department’s self-study, the review committee report, and comments offered to correct errors of fact in that report.

As you and your colleagues are well aware, your department is at a juncture concerning its independent organization. This memo is not intended to address the ongoing conversation about the department’s future, but rather, to document completion of the ten-year review of these academic programs. Of course, if there are changes in the administrative structure housing these programs, or if there are program revisions provoked by such changes, additional review may be requested – but for the time being, the APC considers the review of these programs complete.

The council was impressed by the extent to which teaching is central to the work of the department: the department fields an undergraduate major in the History of Science, Medicine, and Technology (as well as a version of that major in conjunction with a History major). The review committee noted that the department occupies an interesting space between the humanities and sciences, and provides important “service” coursework of Humanities courses and credits to students interested in STEM fields; conversely, the department also introduces important principles of science to students in Humanities majors. In the major, learning objectives support integrative liberal education and align with institutional learning outcomes; courses are offered to convey these outcomes, and those outcomes are assessed. A qualitative review of capstone papers is used to assess students’ ability to engage in research, evaluate sources, synthesize information, and communicate with an audience. Complementing this review
is a questionnaire that probes students’ experience of the major and interaction with the department. The results of these assessments have led the faculty to reconsider the way curriculum is structured, with the reasonable conclusion that the department may explore course requisites to more effectively guide students through the course array, and to consider how to introduce research and research skills courses earlier in the curriculum.

The review committee, as you know, described the graduate program as “the crown jewel” of the department. This is remarkable, since the majority of your students enter the program without a background in the history of science, and the MA program must introduce students to the field – work that in more common academic programs would be delivered via an undergraduate major. The MA program advising strategy offers opportunities to assess student progress with respect to program requirements, and to systematically reflect on overall program performance. The doctoral program also offers regular opportunities for faculty to evaluate students. For example, annual progress reports are submitted to advisors and degree committees, and they are reviewed by all program faculty. Reflection on these materials and advising contacts for purposes of program assessment might bring to light information that could address the long time to degree. Like many other graduate programs, the department tracks program outcomes via graduates’ awards, honors, and placement. These outcomes are important; however, the faculty will be expected to discuss how they evaluate student learning more directly. This work will be a focus of Graduate School attention in the coming years, and we anticipate the faculty will be able to build on the foundation of revealed here to respond as needed.

The recommendations in the review committee’s report did not specify action concerning the academic programs or their assessment. We would, however, suggest that some attention be paid to the following:

- Learning outcomes for graduate education will need to be submitted to the Graduate School, via the tool for reporting learning goals (http://provost.wisc.edu/assessment/).
- The provost’s site also makes available a “template” for assessment plans; since the next stage of the campus project concerning assessment will be to file updated assessment plans, you may wish to work ahead by reformulating your assessment efforts to conform to that template.
- We will echo a recommendation offered to your colleagues in the Department of History: Please seek formal approval for the joint graduate program between History and the History of Science, Medicine and Technology, if this program is to persist. More generally, we encourage you to work more closely with History to administer shared programs, so students who are pursuing this combined major are served well.

In closing, I want to thank you for thoughtfully engaging the difficult questions facing small departments like yours.

xc:
Elaine M. Klein, Assistant Dean for Academic Planning, L&S
Daniel Kleinman, Associate Dean, Graduate School
Jocelyn Milner, Director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research
Susan Zaeske, Associate Dean for the Humanities, L&S
To: Associate Dean Sue Zaeske  
From: The review committee for the History of Science Program  
Date: January 10, 2015  
Re: Review and possible reorganization of the History of Science Program  

**History of Science Program Review – REVISED REPORT**  

Review Committee: Michael Titelbaum (Philosophy), Pam Potter (German), and (chair) Karl Shoemaker (History and Legal Studies).  

Pursuant to a request from the Associate Dean's Office, this committee undertook a review of the History of Science Department's academic programs. The review was conducted by reviewing the pertinent documents describing the requirements, structure, and implementation of the undergraduate and graduate programs, and by holding extended interviews with most, but not all, members of the department, including the Chair, senior faculty, new faculty, and graduate students. In addition, this committee was asked by the Dean's Office to make recommendations concerning the possible merger of the History of Science with another unit. Because of this aspect of the committee’s charge, we met with as many faculty and students as were willing to meet with us. In the weeks following our interviews, the committee also received subsequent email and memo correspondences from some faculty and graduate students seeking to expand or clarify aspects of our interviews. Because the putative stakes of this review, and the possibility of a reorganization of the History of Science Department were well known throughout the department, this review took longer than usual, as we sought input, perspectives, and recommendations from all the relevant stakeholders.  

This committee met with the following members of the History of Science Department: Professors Tom Broman (Chair), Lynn Nyhart, Sue Lederer, Mike Shank, Florence Hsia, Judy Houck, Robin Rider, Eric Shatzberg, and Nicole Nelson. In addition we met "town-hall style" with a group of 10 graduate students that included first and second year graduate students, as well as students who are nearing the end of their graduate degree program.  

This report contains 1) an overview of the History of Science Department; 2) a review of the undergraduate program; 3) a review of the graduate program; and 4) a series of recommendations relevant to the possible merger or reorganization of the History of Science Department. The recommendations begin on page 10 of this document.  

**Overview**  

The History of Science Department is the oldest independent History of Science program in the country. It was established in 1941 and has been in continuous operation since 1947. In that time, it has taught tens of thousands of undergraduate
students, and produced over 170 Ph.Ds. It is unquestionably one of the leading such programs in the world. In just the most recent decade, its graduates have attained tenure-track faculty positions in many of the top History of Science, Medical History, or History programs in North and South America including: Princeton, Wesleyan, University of Texas at Austin, University of New Mexico, Bucknell, University of Albany, Mississippi State University, University of Michigan Health System, SUNY-Potsdam, West Chester University (Pennsylvania), Instituto Politécnico Nacional (Mexico City), and Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá, Colombia).

Current faculty in the Department have received the most prestigious international awards and fellowships in the field, including awards from the NEH, the ACLS, the National Science Foundation (several), the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation (two), the National Humanities Center, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (the leading postgraduate research institute in history of science internationally), and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris (two). The immediate past-president of the History of Science Society (Nyhart) and the current president of the American Society for Environmental History (Mittman) came from the UW-Madison’s History of Science Department.

The History of Science Department administers the undergraduate (BA) and graduate (MA and PhD) majors of the UW-Madison’s Program in History of Science, Medicine, and Technology; it also co-administers the Joint (undergraduate) Major in History and History of Science with the History Department. These academic programs span the globe from antiquity to the present, and range across the physical, biological, and social sciences to medicine and technology. All historical aspects of science, medicine, and technology receive attention—from their internal development to their broader social contexts, including their relationships with institutions, philosophy, politics, religion, gender, race and ethnicity, visual and material culture, and literature.

In the course of the committee’s work we were provided with documentation of the following: academic program information, the relationship between expected learning outcomes and program requirements, assessment efforts, the relationship between the academic programs and the departmental mission, and the program's contribution to the institutional and disciplinary goals of the College.

Because this committee was explicitly charged with review of the academic programs, it did not review the administrative aspects of the program or its (admittedly complex) organizational structures. Nonetheless, as our report will show, there are aspects of the graduate and undergraduate academic programs administered by the department that are impossible to evaluate without acknowledging some rather severe challenges that the department faces in regard to staff and governance structures.
Undergraduate Programs

Overview

The History of Science Department occupies a unique place in the UW's academic programs because it sits at the intersection of the natural and social sciences and the humanities. Because of this, the department serves two different constituencies among UW undergraduates. The department's 100- and 200-level offerings are divided into two groupings, each aimed at one of these two constituencies. One constituency is the students who take courses offered by historians of science as part of the Integrated Liberal Studies (ILS) program, especially the survey courses ILS 201 and 202 (Western Culture: Science, Technology, Philosophy I and II). These courses offer distribution credit in the natural sciences—thus, their appeal is primarily to students who are not necessarily interested in the sciences for a major. Given the significance of science and technology in contemporary society, these courses play a crucial part in educating non-scientists about the goals, methods, social roles, and problems of modern scientific practice.

The second undergraduate constituency that the department serves is students in the natural and social sciences seeking to situate their interests in broader social, cultural and intellectual contexts. This is encouraged by the fact that most of the department’s introductory and intermediate-level courses confer humanities distribution credit, which makes them attractive to students in mathematics, engineering, and the natural and social sciences who are looking for relevant ways to fulfill breadth requirements. This constituency’s prominence has increased more recently as issues of social and environmental responsibility have become more central to public debates on science, medicine, and technology. Several courses at the introductory level serve this function, including a three-semester survey sequence (201: Origins of Scientific Thought; 202: The Making of Modern Science; and 203: Science in the 20th Century). Other offerings are aimed at particular pre-professional groups. Thus, Hist. Sci. 212 (Bodies, Diseases, and Healers: An Introduction to the History of Medicine) engages students interested in the health professions, while Hist. Sci. 222 (Technology and Social Change in History) addresses itself primarily to engineering students. A new course, Hist. Sci. 133: “Biology and Society,” taught by Prof. Nicole Nelson, represents an attempt by the department to reach out in a more focused way to the substantial population of undergraduates who come to the UW intending to major in the cross-college Biology major.

The department’s 300-500-level courses generally provide more specific topical courses and surveys. Generally enrolling 20-40 students, these courses tend to be dominated by science students, with undergraduate History of Science majors a much smaller group within any class. These courses also serve as introductory surveys for the department's graduate students, who participate in a separate weekly graduate section.
Finally, the department offers high-impact learning at the introductory level by offering FIG seminars (and FIG sections of introductory survey courses), introductory and sophomore-level honors courses (180, 286), and an honors Comm B seminar (280). These are all topical, with topics changing semester by semester; they typically involve considerable formal and/or informal writing. The department is typically able to offer three or four of these per year in total, given the other demands faculty face.

The learning outcomes prescribed for these courses vary from course to course, depending, for example, on whether the course is pitched at the introductory or advanced level and whether a research paper is required. The learning objectives, which mirror the Wisconsin Essential Learning Outcomes for UW-Madison Students, aim to teach students to:

- analyze and critique different rhetorical arguments and understand the different styles of reasoning and argument between science and history.
- understand and present orally in discussion the differing evidentiary and rhetorical values of primary sources and secondary sources in the study of history.
- identify and analyze within their social, cultural, and economic contexts key historical issues, and assess their significance.
- present arguments in response to essay prompts that formulate a clear thesis, mobilize evidence clearly and succinctly, and organize the paper’s argument into an identifiable and logical structure.
- describe and assess how scientific, medical and technological ideas, practices, and artifacts both shape the particular societies and cultures in which they occur and are shaped by them.

In capstone courses, the department further states that its learning objectives are:

- synthesize information from diverse sources;
- formulate research questions appropriate to a particular historical object in science, technology, or medicine; identify the range and limitations of primary and secondary sources for researching those questions; and develop creative, original thinking about such questions;
- present the results of research in the form of clear writing that combines historical narrative with analytical and synthetic arguments.

In the words of the department's own self-study:
“The intellectual and practical skills of inquiry and analysis, creative and critical thinking, and written and oral communication, in particular, are at the heart of the skills we teach. In addition to promoting integrative learning, with synthesis a goal of many of our courses but especially the capstone, our courses ask big questions; many, especially those dealing with biomedicine, technology, and environment, address issues of personal and social responsibility.”

**Assessment of Student Learning Objectives**

In order to determine the extent to which the department is successful in helping students meet these learning objectives, the department has in recent years instituted a set of assessment exercises for capstone students. The exercises have taken two forms. For a capstone level course (History 555), Professors Mike Shank and Robin Rider conducted an in-depth qualitative evaluation of each student research paper produced in the class. These findings were condensed and included as an appendix in the department’s most recent self-study. In addition, the department has students respond to a questionnaire that asks students a range of questions about their previous History of Science courses, their future plans, and their experiences in the capstone course. These responses are then compared to the department’s learning objectives and included in the department’s self-studies.

**Review committee’s evaluation**

The History of Science Department is a department with a small number of undergraduate majors, but which does a very large amount of service teaching within the College of Letters and Science, as well as for undergraduate students in other Schools across campus. The department has done a good job establishing learning criteria for its courses, and responding to requirements to provide external metrics for learning outcomes for undergraduate students. The department reaches student constituencies much broader than most humanities-based departments within the College of Letters and Science, and in many cases is the only contact point with the humanities and social sciences for students pursuing STEM degrees.

That said, it is quite clear that the undergraduate teaching mission of the department has been compromised to a certain extent by staffing shortages. This has put added pressure on department chairs and other faculty in the department to spend inordinate time performing mundane administrative tasks (e.g. reading DARS and ISIS reports, tracking student progress toward the major or certificates). In essence, the highest paid members of the department are spending too much time doing work that could be performed by minimally-trained classified staff. This is poor stewardship of the state’s, the University’s, the College’s, and the Department’s resources. Such pressures have contributed to circumstances in which basic administrative questions are too frequently “kicked up the hill,” requiring responses from South Hall and putting pressure on administrative resources outside the department. This has the effect of taking faculty away from the teaching, research,
and committee-level work they are hired to do, and means that students seeking to satisfy the requirements of the department’s programs are underserved.

The Graduate Program

Overview

The graduate program cultivated by the department’s faculty is clearly the crown jewel of the department. The department’s graduate program attracts students with a wide range of backgrounds and professional interests to the field. Since 2004, the overall graduate student cohort has included 50% who majored in the sciences as undergraduates, 12% who double-majored in the sciences and the humanities, 14% who majored in the humanities, and 24% who majored in history (including history of science). The department’s 2-year M.A. program is designed to introduce such students to the field and to build intellectual community while encouraging the development of diverse interests. Students are required to concentrate their coursework on courses taught by program faculty, with 21 of 30 total credits to be taken in the History of Science, Medicine, and Technology (HSMT) graduate program. One of the required courses is Hist. Sci. 720, a pro-seminar on historiography and methods, which is taken during the first year of graduate work. HSMT courses taken at the 300 or 500 level include a separate graduate student section, which has historically been taught as an overload by program faculty. Breadth requirements also ensure familiarity with the range of areas and methodologies in the field, as M.A. coursework must cover four of five distribution areas (Science: Ancient through Enlightenment; Modern Science & Technology; Medicine & Public Health; Transnational Science & Medicine; Race, Gender, Class, & Religion in Science & Medicine). While the department’s M.A. degree does not require a foreign language, students must demonstrate proficiency in French, German, or an approved alternative in order to be admitted to the Ph.D. program, which requires proficiency in two foreign languages. As a result, students typically demonstrate proficiency in one foreign language in the course of the M.A. program.

Advising and evaluation in the M.A. program comes in several forms. The primary method is through coursework supervision (including a minimum of three seminars, at least two of which must be in the HSMT graduate program). In addition, there is a first-year review, which takes place at the beginning of the second year in the program. All HSMT faculty review each student’s portfolio (self-assessment, research paper written during the first year of the program, transcript) and provide feedback to each student. The M.A. paper is produced under the supervision of the chosen M.A. advisor, as well as, typically, through enrollment by M.A. paper writers in Hist. Sci. 925. Hist. Sci. 925 has normally been taught as an overload by program faculty. Finally, the M.A. paper itself, due in April of the second year in the program, is evaluated by all HSMT faculty, who provide collective feedback to each student. In addition, the department holds weekly brown bags and monthly colloquia in which all graduate students are expected to participate. The formal structure of the M.A. program is designed both to build a sense of intellectual
community and to encourage intellectual diversity.

The department also offers an M.A. track in the History of Medicine for students with prior graduate training in one of the health professions, though it has not admitted a student to this track in the past decade. The department is committed to retaining this option in light of its receptivity to students from various backgrounds.

The Ph.D. program is similarly designed to encourage students to explore individual interests in a structured manner. The department requires students to complete three preliminary examination fields, each directed by a separate faculty member. This typically involves faculty meeting once a week with students for ‘off-the-books’ prelim readings preparation. At the examination stage, fields are examined both orally and in writing, with all members of the prelim committee evaluating all the written essays. A student in the Ph.D. program must submit an annual progress report to his or her advisor, the DGS, and dissertation committee members. These annual reports are also reviewed by all program faculty at the spring financial aid meeting. Students are expected to pass prelims before the beginning of the seventh semester, and to submit a dissertation proposal within that semester.

**Graduate Program Learning Outcomes**

The department tends to evaluate the success of its graduate programs in terms of professional development, fellowships and awards, and tenure-track placement, the coin of the realm in doctoral programs. In these important measures, the department shines. Over the past decade, a time span that included 38 Ph.D. graduates or current students, students in the program have received competitive campus awards, including a Dana-Allen Dissertation Fellowship in the Humanities; three Humanities Exposed Public Scholarship Fellowships, a Public Humanities Fellowship; a Sawyer Seminar Dissertation Fellowship; a Center for German and European Studies Graduate Fellowship; three Mellon-Wisconsin Summer Fellowships; and two Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeships (IGERT), the National Science Foundation’s flagship interdisciplinary training program.

The department’s graduate students have also excelled in obtaining extramural support in this period, including three National Science Foundation (NSF) multi-year graduate research fellowships; seven NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Grants; two Fulbright-Hays dissertation research fellowships; and two multi-year Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada fellowships. Other external awards include a 9-month Chemical Heritage Foundation fellowship; two 1-year Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Grants; a 15-month Fulbright-Institute of International Education grant; a 1-year Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation Fellowship; a 1-year Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship; a Smithsonian Summer Predoctoral Fellowship; two dissertation grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health & Society Scholars Program; a Doris Duke Conservation Fellowship; an Aurora Research Institute Fellowship
(Inuvik, Canada); and a grant from the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Panel on Theological Education. A similar variety of competitive grants including FLAS (14), ACLS, and DAAD awards have allowed the department’s students to learn foreign languages needed for their research. Graduate students have shown themselves to be similarly proactive and successful in applying for and receiving grants for archival research from the Graduate School and the Holtz Center for Science and Technology, along with other UW sources. Extramural sources of support have come from the Smithsonian Institution; Chemical Heritage Foundation; American Institute of the History of Pharmacy; New York Academy of Medicine; Hill Monastic Manuscript Library; Countway Library (Boston Medical Library/Harvard Medical School); Smith College; Cushman Center for the Study of American Catholicism (Notre Dame), Cornell University’s College of Human Ecology; UCLA School of Medicine; Sallie Bingham Center for Women’s History & Culture (Duke University); Scientific Instrument Society; American Philosophical Society; and the Network in Canadian History & Environment.

In order to professionalize its students, the department holds weekly brown bags, a venue to report on work-in-progress, practice conference presentations, and discuss professional issues. Students at all levels of the program are expected to actively participate. The department also mentors its students’ teaching, and their accomplishments have been recognized by the University. In the past decade, students in the department have received a total of twenty-four teaching assistant awards. Six have been prestigious campus-wide awards, and nine graduate students have been chosen as L&S Teaching Fellows. Additional teaching awards have come from Integrated Liberal Studies (4) and University Housing (5).

Finally, the department mentors and encourages students to participate in professional conferences. Department graduate students have been heavily involved in organizing symposia and conferences on campus (as volunteers), including the Mellon Foundation Workshop on “Power and Machines in the Early Modern Period” (2005-2006); Midwest Junto for the History of Science (2006 and 2015); Center for Culture, History, and Environment Annual Graduate Student Symposium (2008, 2009, and 2010); Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences (2009); WHEATS: Workshop for the History of the Environment, Agriculture, Technology, and Science (2010); American Society for Environmental History meeting (2012); and the Vagantes Medieval Graduate Student Conference (2013).

In the decade for which the department has data (2004-2013), the department has graduated 27 PhDs. Half (13) of these hold tenure-track jobs, a remarkable placement rate. These include positions at Princeton, Wesleyan, University of Texas at Austin, University of New Mexico (2), Bucknell, University of Albany, Mississippi State University, University of Michigan Health System, SUNY-Potsdam, West Chester University (Pennsylvania), Instituto Politécnico Nacional (Mexico City), and Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá, Colombia). Five others hold long-term non-tenure-track teaching positions; three have held occasional lectureships; three have
gone into academic administration; three are employed outside academia or not at all; and one currently holds a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science.

Unsurprisingly, the greatest challenge the department’s graduate program faces is the structure of graduate funding. The department has been commendably proactive on this topic. Beginning with the 2005-2006 entering class, the department moved towards a 4-year full funding package as a way of recruiting competitively with its peer graduate programs (especially Harvard, Chicago, Penn, Princeton, Yale, Johns Hopkins, UCLA, University of Illinois, and Vanderbilt). This strategy has been only partly successful. On the one hand, while the department has dramatically reduced the percentage of admits over the past decade, from 43% to 24% of all applicants, the number of incoming students has remained fairly stable over that period. At the same time, the department still struggles to recruit consistently from one year to the next, with considerable fluctuation in class size. The difficulty in attracting top students lies in the low TA stipends, which make the TA component of the funding packages a significant impediment for potential students weighing the financial dimensions of enrolling in the program. For the most recent round of admissions, the department decided to offer 5-year funding packages to top recruits, again as a way of competing effectively with peer graduate programs. While the department anticipates that the new block funding structure for Graduate School fellowship support will provide much-needed flexibility in negotiating new funding packages in light of its ongoing commitments to continuing students, the department still needs other ways of bringing TA support years in line with fellowship support years and has considered modes of collaboration with other graduate programs on campus in order to do this.

As the department’s self-evaluation acknowledges, “the Department of the History of Science is a chimera.” The program exists as part of an L&S unit, and as part of an interdisciplinary degree program. Aware of these challenges, the department has expressed a willingness to “develop creative solutions that will allow us to take advantage of the opportunities before us.”

Finally, because there are so few faculty, and because the Med School faculty do not participate in many crucial governance functions, those functions are distributed among the overburdened L&S faculty. Not only does this take them away from other things they should be doing; it also impacts the quality of what gets done. In this committee’s view, the graduate students seemed more adrift in this department than their peers in other UW graduate programs. Some basic advising tasks, and some aspects of training for the job market, are not being handled by the faculty. The students have done an admirable job putting their own mechanisms in place as a stopgap, and it is impressive that they have been able to succeed as well as they have.

Recommendations
In the review committee’s view, these are possibilities for the History of Science program going forward: 1) retain the status quo; 2) merge into the Medical School; 3) reorganize into a cross-college research institute with graduate training; or 4) merge into the History Department.

**Status Quo**

Nearly every faculty member of the department that we spoke to recognized that the status quo was not, in all likelihood, sustainable. Given the inadequate staffing issues, the small number of faculty willing or able to take on leadership positions within the department, and the general trend toward consolidation within the college, everyone we spoke to seemed dubious that the status quo would continue.

Any attempt to maintain the status quo would require, at a minimum, new and additional classified staff to perform the basic tasks of timetable, certificate oversight, and provision of accurate information regarding degree requirements at the undergraduate and graduate level. That tasks like these and others are currently being performed by department chairs is not a sustainable situation. Several faculty members expressed either in direct language or by circumlocution a determined judgment that the department suffers considerably due to staffing issues. The only members of the faculty to advocate strongly for the status quo were 1) members with tenure homes in the Medical School, and 2) the new faculty hire.

The graduate students we spoke to were much less at peace with the prospect of merging into another school or department. Many of them expressed in clear and impassioned ways that they had chosen this graduate program precisely because of its unique intellectual and professional profile, and all of them expressed deep anxiety about what any merger would do to their academic careers. This concern, when evaluated in light of the remarkable success in tenure-track placement the department has enjoyed over the last decade, is quite understandable.

**Move into the Medical School**

The prospect of folding into the Medical School, a school that is already tenure home to 6 of the department’s 13 members, appears to be the most attractive merger and most discussed alternative in the department. Maintaining a distinct department within the Medical School, with the same Medical School faculty involved, would help preserve the intellectual integrity of the department and the research, teaching, and training it performs.

That said, it should be noted immediately that this alternative was most preferred by faculty members housed in the College of Letters and Science. Attitudes toward such a merger on the part of faculty already housed in the Medical School were considerably cooler. While some saw its potential, others were quite certain that the idea of such a merger would not be well received by leadership in the Medical School. Medical School faculty were concerned about 1) reconciling current teaching
loads and salaries of L&S faculty with fairly different standards in the Medical School (without taxing scarce Medical School resources) 2) a lack of commitment from the Medical School to undergraduate teaching. This last concern is particularly relevant, given the large amount of undergraduate service teaching for STEM students already undertaken by the department.

**Reorganization of the Holtz Center**

Some faculty in the department envision a cross-college research institute, using the Holtz Center as a hub. Eric Schatzberg already plays a prominent role in the Holtz Center. This reorganization would provide an intellectual home for faculty, whose tenure homes might be within relevant disciplinary departments across the University. Within the History of Science Department, the most detailed consideration of what this would look like has been undertaken in regard to the graduate program. Under this possibility, the graduate program could move to the Holtz Center, where it would become part of a broader Science and Technology Studies Ph.D. program. It appears that the Holtz Center steering committee (of which History of Science faculty make up only a portion), has given a positive response to this scenario. And this plan might still work even if the History of Science faculty were merged into another L&S department. Of course, dividing up the portions of relevant graduate funding would remain a challenge. The graduate students we spoke with did not seem aware of this possibility, so we were not able to assess their openness to it.

**Merger with History**

This possibility created the strongest responses from the faculty and graduate students. Both groups seemed to think this was the most likely possible outcome (perhaps in part because the chair of the review committee has a tenure home in History, a fact that came up in several discussions), but both faculty and graduate students were also largely opposed to this outcome. This committee believes strongly that any discussion of such a merger with the History Department would need to be predicated on very clear written agreements designed to preserve the autonomy of the History of Science program within the History Department, particularly in regard to faculty hiring priorities, graduate admissions/funding, and policy-making regarding History of Science’s programs. Also, Medical School faculty currently associated with History of Science would need relevant governance and supervisory rights within History to maintain their active roles within the program.1

Opposition to a merger with History focused largely on threats to the distinct intellectual identity of the History of Science Department, which employs historical methodologies but also a range of other methodologies more naturally at home in

---

1 Although Medical School faculty seemed to favor a merger with history and L&S faculty a merger with the Medical School, both groups were adamant that they wanted to continue working together.
Science, Medicine, and Technology departments. Such concerns are grounded in the experience of History of Science programs at the University of California, Berkeley and at Princeton, which have to some extent been absorbed into the larger intellectual identity of the History departments that house them.

For faculty tenured in the Medical School, the possibility of merging with the History Department was less distressing, largely because most of them saw such a move as only impacting faculty tenured in L&S. Even so, Medical School tenured faculty also expressed concern that such a move would significantly dilute the intellectual identity of the existing department.

For the new department hire, whose work is much more sociological than historical in methodology, the prospect of merger with History was particularly distressing. (She was particularly concerned about dramatically changing the audience to whom her tenure case would be pitched.) Senior members of the department clearly see the new hire(s) as a flight risk if the department is merged with History.

Similarly, many of the graduate students we spoke to expressed that they would have been less likely to apply to the History of Science Department if it had not been a self-standing department. Had they wanted to study their topics in a History Department, many of them said, they would have applied to History departments. Also, History of Science has done an outstanding job of attracting graduate students with scientific backgrounds, but that requires applying somewhat different admissions standards and priorities from what is typical in History. The graduate students are deeply concerned about losing the tight-knit intellectual community they have, as well as the disciplinary richness available to them in the department’s current configuration. The History of Science department currently enjoys the physical location and structural autonomy necessary to allow its students to conduct world-class research in science, medicine, and technology from an interdisciplinary perspective. The students and faculty both fear losing this.

As far as the undergraduate program goes, it would be advantageous even after a merger to have History of Science courses and majors set up slightly differently than other History Department offerings. Multiple faculty suggested keeping their undergraduate courses listed under “History of Science” in the course catalog, to aid students from outside the humanities in finding those courses. It is not unusual for departments to have more than one timetable prefix code for different types of courses, such as “Music” (660) and “Music Performance” (664). The various certificates offered by History of Science would have to be maintained. History of Science majors would also need a different set of requirements from those of standard History majors. Many History of Science majors begin as majors in the sciences, then transfer over late in their undergraduate career. This is facilitated by History of Science’s willingness to count many of their science courses toward the major, a practice that would not be possible if History of Science were just one study program among others in the History Department.
It is clear that any merger with another department should occur only with a plan in place to preserve the ability of the History of Science program to preserve its faculty lines, and to preserve its autonomy in policy-making, graduate admissions, and graduate funding. Any merger that did not adequately safeguard the program’s autonomy in these areas would have significant and deleterious effects on a long-standing, internationally-recognized field leader in the study of the History of Science as well as Science, Medicine and Technology Studies.