

PROGRAM REVIEW 2008-2011

Division: Social Sciences and Humanities Division

Department or Program: California History Center (CHC)

Name and Title of Preparer(s): Tom Izu, Director, CHC

I. Description and Mission of the Program

Which area(s) does this program considerably address (check all that apply):

Basic Skills Transfer Career/Technical Other (describe)*

*The California History Center (CHC) is a collaboration between the college and a community based non-profit, the California History Center Foundation (CHCF), that provides unique educational opportunities in the field of local, regional and state interdisciplinary studies including library / archival services, exhibits, lectures, conferences, oral history instruction, and other activities for students, faculty, staff, and members of the local community.

- A. The mission of the CHC is to support the collaboration between De Anza College and the community-based, 501(c)(3), non-profit organization, the CHCF, in providing educational services and programming in the field of California studies and regional history for students, faculty, and staff of the college and members of the local community and public at large. CHC utilizes the resources of both the college and CHCF to accomplish this mission.
- B. The CHC and CHCF collaboration began in 1969 as a unique "learning-by-experience" program that immersed students directly into local community politics and history through research, publication, and exhibit projects. It, in many ways, anticipated the current acceptance of civic engagement as an important educational tool. CHC continues to provide this invaluable link to the local community and other statewide resources related to the interdisciplinary study of California for the campus community. It creates unique opportunities for both faculty and students to access special resources not funded by the college including, a university level library/archives program staffed by a professional librarian/archivist, an exhibit program, a special events program featuring visiting scholars, writers, and activists, and oral history training. CHC also facilitates positive relationships with local community organizations by acting as a regional resource for organizations and individual community members interested in research, study, or personal enrichment, a tradition the campus is well known for. In addition, CHC's local history publication program produces books and a quarterly magazine giving the campus a status few institutions have, that of a local publisher that has created works in conjunction with the California State Senate, local municipalities and governmental agencies, and other community organizations and noteworthy writers on various state and local topics. Lastly, CHC is a resource to researchers, writers, and educators from across the country who are investigating regional issues and need specialized information and connections 40 years of operation have gleaned from and developed in the region. All of this is done with very few resources from the college – primarily, the funding of one position, that of the CHC Executive Director.

- C. CHC has enjoyed support from significant donors including the Hugh Stuart Center Charitable Trust, the Stella B. Gross Charitable Trust and a gift from the Estate of Burrell Leonard establishing an endowment. However, these sources of support including membership contributions from approximately 300 community members continue to decline due to the overall economic downturn and shifts in demographics. CHC is in the process of working with its CHCF community board of trustees to develop a new base of funding support, and to strengthen its board membership to make this possible. With added support, CHC would also be able to increase its ability to do better promotion of its accomplishments to reach broader audiences and new sectors of the regional population.
- D. The CHC program does not offer certificates or degrees, nor does it provide services measured by transfer or career training goals, but does have specific, expected outcomes for faculty, students and community members who visit or use the center's services. CHC expects the faculty it works with to develop an awareness of the services and opportunities CHC can offer them in course related learning activities and curriculum development (oral history projects, special research assignments, etc.). CHC also expects students who use the facility to gain awareness of the value of local and regional historical research. CHC sees the general public's and community organizations awareness of the value of De Anza as a resource for supporting its learning efforts or projects.

II. Retention and Growth

- A. CHC does not have direct enrollment and retention related, activities with measurable outcomes, but please see below...
- B. While CHC does not have direct enrollment and retention related activities with measurable outcomes, it works in support of projects and programs targeting these populations such as Puente and student leadership organizations such as LEAD, APALI (Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute), and clubs such as BSU (Black Student Union) and their faculty / staff advisors. In addition, CHC directly supports the work of the Institute for Community and Civic Engagement in its activities that promote special community based projects aimed at reaching these target populations, especially through its developing oral history program.
- C. ESL students and EWRT students use the CHC Library / Archives and receive assistance from the Librarian / Archivist to develop research papers and complete various exercises coordinated by their instructors and the CHC.

III. Student Equity

- A. Not measurable for this program
- B. CHC supports efforts to reach student equity goals by creating projects and activities that promote diversity and help the campus explore the heritage and history of all students and their communities, but with a special focus on those who may not have been included in traditional history and heritage presentations. CHC does this by linking what has been traditionally seen and supported as local heritage work with the stories and experiences of those communities that have been left out of traditional museum and library presentations.

- C. Declining resources, especially limited staff hours make it difficult to create the support and activities that would strengthen efforts in this area.

IV. **Budget Limitations**

- A. CHC has successfully sustained major cutbacks over the many years of its operation, including staff reductions from four to one position and from a large operating budget to a very small "B" budget allocation for office supplies. It is now at its limit in what it can endure and be expected to function. More recently, elimination of Strategic Planning funds for the CHC's oral history project has made it difficult to expand this particular program and to fully implement and realize the potential of the oral history work. Cutbacks in faculty hires have also limited the number of local history courses CHC can offer through the history department, making it difficult to create classes targeting new sectors of students such as K-12 teachers or administrators in need of re-training in California History or studies to help them face reassignment initiated by the state budget crisis.
- B. The college funds only the CHC executive director position and provides a small "B" budget for operations. The rest of the program is sponsored by the CHCF and its fundraising activities. The elimination of the executive director's position would jeopardize the collaboration between the CHCF and the college given that this position provides the only college oversight of its operation. Without this key staffing element and supervised collaboration, CHCF would not be able to operate on the campus for an extended period of time. This would lead to the removal of the CHCF's library / archives, exhibit, publications, and its educational events and activities as well as the valuable link CHCF provides to other regional community history and cultural resource organization from campus life. In addition, the elimination of the program would negatively impact campus-community relations nurtured for over 40 years, especially those community representatives concerned with preservation of campus historic structures in which CHC is currently housed, donors, and various organizational representatives. Lastly it is highly unlikely that a program of this nature could be "restored" on campus again if eliminated from the budget.

V. **Additional Comments (optional):**

- **Strategic Planning Initiatives (Community Collaborations, Cultural Competency, Outreach, and Individualized Attention for Retention):**

CHC initiated an oral history training project through the Strategic Planning Initiatives that helps to integrate oral history and local community history projects into the courses of the college. The project helps train both faculty and students in the skills needed to do basic level oral history work and educates both groups to the importance and significance of research that utilizes local and regional resources and subjects.

- **Relationships with Other Programs:**

CHC works closely with many of the college's divisions, programs, special projects, and with various student clubs and organizations, including the Institute for Community and Civic Engagement, Social Sciences and Humanities faculty, Intercultural/International Division faculty, Language Arts Faculty, Environmental Studies faculty, APALI, LEAD, Puente, and most of the Heritage Month planning committees (Women's History Month, Black History Month, Latino Heritage Month, Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, etc.). CHC creates opportunities for these groups to work together and with community

groups or resources to create educational events, programs and services and helps eliminate duplication of efforts and increases efficient uses of funding. An example of the CHC working to bring new resources from the community to the campus includes the CHC's participation in the Silicon Valley History Online program initiated by local libraries, history organizations, and universities to provide Internet access to archival collections for students and other researchers studying Silicon Valley <www.siliconvalleyhistory.org>. In addition, CHCF now funds two separate scholarships for De Anza College students using monies secured through community donations. Lastly, CHC has also uses its community-based resources and technical skills to help groups - be they student organizations or campus programs - create publications and exhibits to further their specific missions related to retention, promotion, or advocacy. In this way CHC helps the campus build a cultural and intellectual life with a very limited budget.

- **Comparable Programs at other Institutions:**

We are not aware of any other similar collaborative programs at other community colleges in the state.