To: Racquel Goff; Dean Karen Campbell; Brian Bachmann, CEP Chair
   racquel.goff@vanderbilt.edu; Karen.e.campbell@vanderbilt.edu;
brian.bachmann@vanderbilt.edu
From: David Carlton, Director of the Joint Major in Economics and History
Re: Delete Option 3 capstone alternative credit for history major
Date: Jan. 21, 2015

RATIONALE

In the fall of 2009 the Department of History decided to offer “capstone alternative”
courses. The idea was to broaden the array of topical and thematic seminars that upperclassmen
could take and in which history majors could fulfill their capstone requirement. The Joint Major
in Economics and History followed suit in order to maintain consistency in our requirements. In
many ways the five-year experiment has been a success, but in a particularly crucial realm it has
been disappointing—students taking capstone alternative courses tend to produce less rigorous
research papers than in our standard capstone seminars (History 295). This is something that
each History DUS noted as they assessed the seminar papers at the end of each year; as the
assessor for Economics and History, I have noticed the same thing. In truth some papers
produced in capstone alternative courses were truly excellent, but the general level remained
lower than what typically emerged from 295s. The issue has been discussed in the History
Department Undergraduate Studies Committee (Professors Michael Bess, Arleen Tuchman, Tom
Schwartz, and Edward Wright-Rios—including myself in earlier years) and as a full department.
What seems clear is that because not all students enrolled in capstone alternative classes are
doing the capstone option the classes are not centered on research and writing in the same way as
the 295s. In a sense, professors in these classes can’t “teach the paper” like the 295s typically do
since sometimes more than half the class is not doing this kind of project. Furthermore, in
keeping with Vanderbilt’s new strategic plan, both the History Department and those supervising
the Joint Major in Economics and History view the capstone papers as our undergraduate history
majors’ “immersion” experience, and we believe that it is important to maintain the standards
that make it a deeply meaningful and rigorous experience. Therefore, after considerable debate,
the History Department decided to cease offering capstone alternative courses as such, and, both
for reasons of policy and of consistency, the Joint Major is following suit. The courses affected
will continue to be taught as upper level seminars; however, all Economics and History majors
will henceforth be required to fulfill their capstone requirement in a standard History 295.

Note that the Department of History has already submitted their proposal for the same
action -- deleting Option 3 in the History Major pages. The Department of History voted,
unanimously (17-0) to delete “Option 3” under item “3. Capstone course (3-6 hours)” of the
history major. This vote was taken on October 13, 2014. Their submission for this proposal has
already been approved to be moved on to the Faculty Council.

The Chair of the Economics Department, Kamal Saggi, has given his approval for this
update to occur. The Economics Department has voted unanimously (23-0) to delete “Option 3”
under the history section of the Economics and History Interdisciplinary major page. Since this
is a joint major and has no faculty of its own, the History and Economics votes are equivalent to a faculty vote.

**ECONOMICS AND HISTORY CURRENT CATALOG ENTRY**

*History (18 credit hours)*

No more than 3 credit hours of AP or IB credit in history courses may count toward this total.

History 200W or 297; must be taken by the end of the junior year. 297 is limited to second-semester juniors who have been admitted to the Honors Program. Students entering the Honors Program who have already taken 200W will receive elective credit for that course.

History 295, a course from Option 3 as listed in the history major description for a capstone option (prerequisite: History 200W), or History 298a--298b (available only to students in the honors program). Note: At the discretion of the director of honors and the director of undergraduate studies in history, a student who has taken 298a but does not take 298b may be considered to have fulfilled the capstone requirement for the major. No Economic History Core Course may be double-counted as a capstone course.

Four other history courses not included in the economic history core (note that 169 is NOT accepted as an elective for the major). These electives may also include any of the following: AADS 102, 205, 265; ASIA 230; CLAS 207, 208, 209, 212, 213, 223, 224; EUS 201, 220, DIV 2750, 3217; GER 182; HOD 1150; JS 115F.09, 120, 122, 123, 124, 156, 158, 222, 234, 245, 252, 256, 257; MHS 208; PHIL 210; RLST 206, 216.

**ECONOMICS AND HISTORY PROPOSED CATALOG ENTRY**

*History (18 credit hours)*

No more than 3 credit hours of AP or IB credit in history courses may count toward this total.

(1) History 200W or 297; must be taken by the end of the junior year. 297 is limited to second-semester juniors who have been admitted to the Honors Program. Students entering the Honors Program who have already taken 200W will receive elective credit for that course.

(2) History 4960 {295} (Prerequisite: 3000W {200W}), a course from Option 3 as listed in the history major description for a capstone option (prerequisite: History 200W), or History 4980--4981 {298a--298b} (available only to students in the honors program). Note: At the discretion of the director of honors and the director of undergraduate studies in history, a student who has taken earned credit for 4980 {298a} but does not take 4981 {298b} may be considered to have fulfilled the capstone requirement for the major. No Economic History Core Course may be double-counted as a capstone course.
(3) Four other history courses not included in the economic history core. (note that 169 is NOT accepted as an elective for the major). These electives may also include any of the following: AADS 2106 {102}, 4256 {205}, 2654 {265}; ASIA 2630 {230}; CLAS 2100 {207}, 2110 {208}, 2120 {209}, 2150 {212}, 2160 {213}, 2180 {223}, 3010 {224}; EUS 2201 {201}, 2220 {220}, DIV 6730 {2750}, 6740 {3217}; GER 2442 {182}; HOD 1115 {1150}; JS 1111.09 {115F.09}, 2600 {120}, 1200 {122}, 1220 {123}, 1240 {124}, 3100 {156}, 2450 {158}, 2620 {222}, 3210 {234}, 3000 {245}, 2560 {252}, 2540 {256}, 3892 {257}; MHS 2110 {208}; PHIL 2100 {210}; RLST 3306 {206}, 3316 {216}.

ECONOMICS AND HISTORY PROPOSED CATALOG ENTRY (Clean Copy):

History (18 credit hours)

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Dear Jonathan,

Attached you will find the application materials for a CEP decision on proposed for changes in History and Economics and a February decision memo requesting a number of minor revisions. Revisions have been received and approved by email pending minor revisions, by the Committee for Education Programs on April 23th, 2015 (6/6 responding, voting in favor, via email: Blackbourn, Hill, King, Zeller, Morgan, Bachmann). Attached are the revised documents, redline and this email memo, indicating that the CEP is recommending this for consideration by Faculty Council.

Best Regards,

Brian Bachmann

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