



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Council on Postsecondary Education
OFFICE OF THE POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER
560 Jefferson Boulevard Suite 100
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886-1304

Enclosure 5b2
April 14, 2016

Barbara S. Cottam
Chair

TO: Members of the Council on Postsecondary Education

**Council on Elementary and
Secondary Education**

FROM: Jim Purcell, Ed.D, Commissioner for Postsecondary Education

Daniel P. McConaghy
Chair

DATE: April 4, 2016

Amy Beretta, Esq.

RE: RIC Proposal for a Certificate of Graduate Study in Historical
Studies

Colleen A. Callahan, Ed.D.

Background

Karin Forbes

Rhode Island College (RIC) proposes to offer a 15- credit Certificate of Graduate Study in Historical Studies. The certificate is intended to be a flexible program that provides students who want to expand their knowledge of history with the opportunity to concentrate in a particular area.

Jo Eva Gaines

Marta V. Martinez

Lawrence Purtill

Rationale

Joyce L. Stevos, Ph.D.

The courses in the certificate are a subset of the requirements for an MA in History. Students can either complete the certificate and then transition into the MA program or conversely, students who begin but chose not to finish the MA will have earned a certificate in historical studies from RIC.

**Council on Postsecondary
Education**

William Foulkes
Chair

The certificate provides an enhancement of content knowledge as a professional credential and improves competitiveness in the workforce for secondary teachers and staff at museums, historical sites/archives, historical preservation organizations, non-profits, libraries, lobbying organizations, architectural firms, and zoning boards. Specific groups that may hire certificate holders include: Rhode Island Historical Society, Newport Preservation Society, North Burial Ground Project, Roger Williams National Historical Site, Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, Rhode Island State Archives, Lippitt House Museum, and RISD Museum.

Michael Bernstein

Dennis Duffy, Esq.

The Honorable Thomas Izzo

Judy Ouellette

Kerry I. Rafanelli, Esq.

John J. Smith, Jr.

Institutional Role

Dr. Jeffery A. Williams

The CGS in Historical Studies fits within RIC's mission as a regional comprehensive college which includes educating undergraduate and graduate students in an array of arts and sciences and professional programs.

REQUIRED		
HIST 501	Historiography	3
HIST 521	Comparative History	3
Choose 2 from one topic area		6 credits
HIST 550	American History	
HIST 551	Western History	
HIST 552	Non-Western History	
Choose 1		3 credits
HIST 561	Graduate Seminar in History	
HIST 562	Graduate Reading Seminar	
TOTAL CGS		15 Credits

Students choose between the Graduate Seminar in History or the Graduate Reading Seminar. In the Graduate Seminar, students gain a greater knowledge of materials for historical study, methods of research and skill in solving problems of analysis and exposition. In the Graduate Reading Seminar students explore the content and extended bibliography of a selected topic and thereby develop skill in analysis, critical thinking and comparative study.

Faculty and Staff

All courses are already offered as part of the MA in History and will be taught by existing faculty.

Students

RIC expects 1-2 students per year to complete a CGS. These students may also decide to continue taking courses to pursue a MA degree.

Evaluation

The college plans to evaluate this program by measuring completion rates, student GPAs, and student satisfaction determined through surveys and informal discussions with advisees.

Program Viability

RIC states the program is viable because the certificate utilizes existing courses that are already being taught.

RIOPC Review

The *Regulations Governing Academic Changes in Rhode Island Public Institutions of Higher Education* require that proposals be circulated among the other public institutions of higher education and comments invited. The University of Rhode Island noted a concern with the value for students that a general certificate in historical studies would provide in terms of careers and workforce competitiveness. The University noted its interest in developing unique and targeted certificates in history by including courses in other fields such as computer science and business. The University notes that these interdisciplinary certificates would give students specific skills and have more value for students than a general historical studies certificate.

RIOPC staff reviewed the proposal for the certificate and comments received from the University of Rhode Island. We believe the certificate is academically sound in providing graduate students the opportunity to enhance their knowledge in specific areas of history and increase their skills as historians. RIC notes that this certificate may be useful for secondary school teachers who wish to teach particular areas of history. In addition, the certificate may assist those history graduates who are trying to obtain employment in a cultural or historical organization. The academic changes presented are within the mission, role and scope of Rhode Island College and do not require Council approval.