A Message from the Chair

Dear alumni, faculty, and friends of the History Department,

This academic year presented us with unprecedented challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us all to work from home, leaving many of us to mourn the loss of the vibrant community we share at UCSB. At the same time, our circumstances have reminded us how important our virtual connections are. It is in this spirit of maintaining ties to our own broader community that I write to you today.

At the end of the Winter quarter, UCSB went remote. Faculty and students alike had to adjust quickly to a new mode of education. Professors and TAs had to retool their courses and find innovative ways to teach from hastily constructed home offices. Undergraduate and graduate students, many of whom have to work long hours and juggle time with school work, have found it challenging. Our graduate students have also suffered significant setbacks. Ongoing travel bans mean that UC-released COLA salaries are not forthcoming; our students need these salaries to get through the tough summer months. We all face an uncertain future, and it is only with the support of our community that we will emerge from this crisis.

We are very thankful to all who have given, but we face critical financial shortfalls in the coming year. For those who are able, please consider donating to the History Department or the History Associates Graduate Fellowships. While it is a cliché, even the smallest amount helps. Most important of all, stay connected with us. We want to know how you’re doing, and we want to keep you up to date on the progress we’re making.

Sincerely,

Erika Rappaport
Chair, UCSB Department of History

In Solidarity

The History Department’s Stance on Racial Justice

George Floyd’s slow, excruciating, and brutal death on May 25, 2020 has sparked a global uprising. The History faculty believe that as human beings, as historians, and as a department we have a duty to raise our voices. Understanding and interrogating our racialized past has never been more urgent. We must become part of the solution.

Full Statement and Plan for Action

COLA, COVID-19 and Economic Anxiety

According to Forbes, the cost of living in Santa Barbara is 23.9% above the national average. Starting early this year, many UCSB History graduate students joined the UC-wide movement called “COLA,” or “Cost of Living Adjustment,” which seeks to make graduate student salaries livable. With COVID, this has become more urgent than ever. COLA last year was successful in pushing the university to provide basic financial support to grad students, but it’s uncertain if this political action will be renewed. We hope to make our case, and we want you to keep us apprised of any progress we’re making.

Full Report: COLA, COVID, and Economic Anxiety

Online Archive: Testimonials on COLA and COVID-19

A Retrospective on the Year

Despite the year’s challenges, we still had much to celebrate, recognizing achievement with the generous award funding from History Associates, our community support group. Here are links to catch you up on some of our accomplishments of the year.

History Associates Awards Program

A Retrospective on the Year

Inspired Presidential Addresses

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Inspired Presidental Addresses

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Inspired Presidental Addresses