

History Task Force Implementation Team Report

October 2018

In April 2018, the History Task Force Implementation Team reported to the Board that it had two remaining objectives to be addressed during the 2018-19 academic year:

1. Responding to the Board's recommendation that the university consider creating a museum or center dedicated to Clemson's history, and
2. Developing a "sustainability plan" for the university administration to ensure that efforts to tell the complete and accurate story of Clemson's history would continue, as described in the History Task Force report, "for generations to come."

We're pleased to report that progress is being made on each priority.

History Center/Museum Study

A consistent theme in all of the Implementation Team's work is that there should be a physical home for telling the Clemson story. All of the consultants we've engaged agree that ***the interpretation of any significant historical site has to start somewhere***. Having a permanent home for programs, people and exhibits that tell the story of Clemson's history would respond to a Board recommendation regarding ". . . *consideration of a center or museum solely dedicated to Clemson's complete history, where artifacts can be housed and the updated historical narrative can be told. This center will not only educate and engage the Clemson family, but the larger community.*"

Building on previous activities such as facilitated workshops, consultant reviews and implementation team discussions, one-on-one interviews with more than two dozen key stakeholders were held over the summer. Ideas and comments were synthesized for a series of focused discussions for further ideation, vetting and prioritizing.

While there was relatively little support expressed for a traditional history museum, there was enough interest in the idea of a history center located in the Trustee House to justify a formal feasibility study. That study is now under way, led by University Planning and Design.

However, there was significantly *more* support for the idea of a forward-looking discovery center that would tell the broader story of Clemson's past, present and future. Our recommendation to the administration and board is that we study the feasibility of both concepts simultaneously.

With the completion of this feasibility study, the Implementation Team will have addressed all of the recommendations of the History Task Force, as shown in the grid on page 3.

Sustainability Plan

Over the past two years, substantial progress has been made to completely and accurately tell the story of Clemson's history, including new historical markers and signage, revisions to published narratives and biographies of key founding figures, special events and an academic course. However, in its final report, the Task Force on the History of Clemson described its charge as developing recommendations on *"how to best tell the complete history of Clemson University for current and future generations."* This clearly indicates that the Board intended for these efforts to be ongoing.

Researching and telling Clemson's full history is a never-ending task, and sustaining these efforts will require a significant university commitment. To that end, the History Task Force Implementation Team developed a Sustainability Plan that has been shared with the university administration. Our recommendations include identifying specific individuals and offices that would have certain ongoing responsibilities, creating a standing advisory committee and developing a physical place for a history center (i.e., the Trustee House feasibility study). These recommendations are under consideration.

Status Report on History Task Force Recommendations

Board recommendation	Status
Overarching -- Develop an official historical narrative.	Updated timeline approved by BOT Feb 2017 and is posted on the history website.
Update biographies of key Clemson's founders	Bios of 6 individuals, including 5 named in the report, have been updated, approved and posted.
Create and place historical markers and plaques	Three historical markers were erected in May 2016. Recommendations on additional markers, monuments and statues were submitted to the Board February 2018.
Erect better, more prominent signage for Gantt Circle.	Board approved naming, signage concept and text in July 2017. Signage has been installed.
Erect more prominent signage for historical buildings.	Design concept approved April 21, 2017. Text and location approved in July 2017. Signage has been installed.
Create CU History social media accounts. Board agreed to use existing accounts rather than build a following for new ones.	History content is frequently posted on sites maintained by the Department of Historic Properties and occasionally on general university sites.
Create page on the university website dedicated to the history of Clemson	Enhanced the design and content of the existing Clemson History website.
Establish a Clemson history week that engages students and alumni in helping share the school's story.	1 st Clemson History in Plain Sight Day held in Nov. 2016. 2 nd held in conjunction with Fort Hill archeological field school in June 2018.
Dedicate a monument or statue to prominent historical figures.	The Implementation Team's recommendations were submitted to the Board in February 2018. The team also had input into naming policy revisions.
Examine the feasibility for a Clemson history museum or center	Feasibility study is under way
Develop an academic course on Clemson history.	Existing online course was redesigned as a hybrid online and in-class summer course and promoted to student leaders and tour guides. Team-taught by Professors Paul Anderson and Rhondda Thomas; will be taught again in Minimester IV, Summer 2019.
Create campus historical tours.	Templates for tours are included in the interpretive plan, which was approved July 21, 2017.