Dear Mary,

The history major at the University of Oklahoma is demanding, delightful and, at its best, deeply rewarding. The faculty are proud of the academic work you, our graduates, have done, and we are curious to hear how being a history major has influenced your life after graduation. Keeping in contact with you will also help us think about how to improve our curriculum. As part of a new initiative to establish regular communication with our alumni, the OU History department is eager to hear from you. We—Professors Lewis and Folsom—represent two different generations of faculty and two different areas of expertise. Both of us were excited by this effort and volunteered to coordinate our alumni relations efforts and that is why we are writing to you today.

We would love to know how your experience as a history major at OU influenced your lives and careers. This comes at a time when the department is trying to increase the numbers of our undergraduate majors. One of the reasons we are writing to you today is to find out how well your education has worked for you. It is often only years later that we can fully appreciate our education—or conversely, its shortcomings. We are also hoping that your testimony can be used to inform prospective undergraduate majors.

We have three questions we would like to ask—

1) What kind of job do you have now? Is it directly or indirectly related to your history major? Or was your college major irrelevant to your working life?
2) How well did your history education prepare you for your life as a citizen? Is there anything you wish we could have done differently?
3) Is there anything you would like to tell today’s undergraduates about why they should major in history?

You can contact either of us at our “snail mail” departmental address, or on e-mail at Judith.S.Lewis-I@ou.edu or Raphael.Folsom@ou.edu.

We look forward to hearing from all of you.

Judith S. Lewis
Edna Hoffman Bowman Presidential Professor of History

Raphael Folsom
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