

**HISTORY PROGRAM,  
Department of History, Political Science, Philosophy, and Geography,  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Student Learning Outcomes ASSESSMENT PLAN, Updated May, 2014  
Department Chair: Dr. Colette Carter  
Primary Contact: Program Coordinator: Dr. Carol Loats**

**I. Description of the History Program**

The undergraduate History Program offers a major - resulting in a BA or BS - and a minor. The program prepares students for careers in many fields, provides general education courses, and supports other programs across the university.

**II. Mission of the College, Department, and History Program**

*College of Humanities and Social Sciences* official mission statement: “The mission of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is to help students develop critical thinking skills, aesthetic awareness, and ethical perspectives, to provide them with the tools and expertise necessary to function as responsible citizens and professionals and to engage in intellectual and artistic pursuits.”

The mission of the *Department* is to provide domains of study both for those who desire knowledge for personal enrichment and for students who desire to apply knowledge toward career objectives. Students who major or minor in the fields of study offered in the department will develop and refine knowledge of other cultures and the historical and political development of the modern world, while also engaging in disciplinary-specific research. The programs in this department both prepare students for various careers as well as fulfill the traditional function of transmitting culture from generation to generation.

The primary mission of the *History undergraduate program* is to prepare students for success in a variety of careers, such as teaching law, government, and private enterprise, and to prepare students for graduate study. The History Program has an equally important mission to support the general education goals of higher education by providing students with courses in the knowledge component area of History. In addition, the program provides courses for students in a number of other programs, including the Liberal Studies Program, the ROTC program, Women's Studies, Chicano Studies, Engineering, and Business.

The History Program mission is directly and solidly aligned with the Department mission regarding career preparation, knowledge, research, and the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation.

The Department and Program mission dovetail with those of CHASS, particularly in terms of the development of critical thinking skills, providing tools and expertise invaluable for effective functioning as citizens and professionals, and providing many forms of experience engaging in intellectual pursuits.

### **III. Program Assessment**

The interaction of teaching and learning is the heart of education. This interaction involves continual assessment both in and outside of the classroom. As a program and as individual faculty members, we want to identify clearly the program goals and to know if our goals for our students are being met by the current curriculum and the instruction provided in the classroom. We want to gather evidence so that we can evaluate what students in our major are learning through their years here and what they have learned by graduation, including their competence in research skills, their knowledge development, and their abilities to think and write as historians.

The History Program has numerous methods of direct and indirect program and curriculum assessment involving the review and analysis of various kinds of evidence by the faculty members in the program.

- This continual assessment occurs informally throughout the academic year as faculty members interact with students and each other.
- Formal discussions occur at program meetings and in the annual assessment process each spring.
- For both direct and indirect program and curriculum assessment, we have developed Student Learning Outcomes that express our goals for our program and curriculum.

Formal assessment methods include the following:

- a. An alumni survey, conducted at least every five years, to get the graduates' perspective on whether the program has provided them with the tools necessary for their professional and individual development on a long-term basis.
- b. A program evaluation, annually if possible, based on input from History majors who are about to graduate, about the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

- c. Formal annual assessment of achievement relating to one or more of the program's Student Learning Outcomes, and drawing on student products from one or more courses offered, which is the focus of this Plan.
- d. Portfolio review, conducted as needed, analyzing papers from two of the program's core courses - historiography and seminar - to evaluate whether the program SLOs have been achieved in the student papers, and whether there is consistency across courses regardless of the instructor.
- e. A faculty workshop or retreat, with several hours dedicated to discussion of the results of the assessment activities of the prior year, including discussion and revision of the direction of the program for the next five-year period.
- f. Program review every 5 years for the Curriculum and Academic Affairs Board.
- g. Anecdotal input and insights from those who supervise interns in the community, to assess whether the internship program is providing students with the skills needed for on-site professional development.
- h. Results from either the Praxis or PLACE test, for information about success rates for students who are combining the History major with the Secondary Education Certification and Licensure program.
- i. Results from teacher and teacher education evaluations of students in the Secondary Education program.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

One of the more direct methods of program and curriculum assessment is the annual assessment process completed each spring (c, above). For this process, we have developed Student Learning Outcomes and linked rubrics that help us in both our formal and informal assessment processes.

The student learning outcomes desired for completion of the history major (BS and BS) are that students will:

1. Demonstrate literacy - analytical reading and effective writing skills - in general, and for historical content.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the history of historical writing, and demonstrate the ability to apply the principles and theories that support historical writing.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of specific times and locations studied, and knowledge of the complexities of the past and the diversity of human cultures in those times and places.
4. Apply the concepts of historical thinking - for example in evaluating change over time.
5. Demonstrate skills in historical research, including historical analysis and interpretation.

### **Annual Assessment Methodology**

The core methodology is as follows: The SLOs are evaluated in a rotation that includes 1 or more SLOs per year. The student products being evaluated are always written work, e.g. short or longer essays or research papers. The faculty members of the program collaborate to select the SLO or SLOs to be evaluated, and for what courses. The Program Coordinator solicits products and the relevant assignment instructions from the faculty members teaching those courses. Usually the student products are their final work for the semester. A team of three members of the faculty, including the Program Coordinator, then meet at the end of the spring semester, and using the rubrics for those SLOs, the faculty members individually evaluate each of the student products, and assign an overall level of achievement for that student's work for that SLO. Discussion follows about the results and especially regarding a) the level of consensus among the faculty members, b) suggestions for how we improve student performance to achieve our goals, and c) possible improvements in the processes and methodology.

Our achievement levels are Exemplary, Proficient, Emerging Competence, and Not Demonstrated.

Beyond that basic methodology, the processes have varied with the courses, products, and SLOs being evaluated. For example, not all the rubrics will be evident for a given SLO in the products for a particular assignment.

Assessing student products from courses at all levels is important to the program. Our initial assessments in the 1990s and early 2000s involved portfolio review (cumulative) and especially examination of the research papers from the Senior Seminar. Since our SLOs are important to the major at all levels – that is, we want all our courses to be taught in alignment with our overall goals for history students – we assess different levels and types of courses throughout our curriculum. The three types of courses are 1) the two upper division core courses, History 300 (Historiography) and History 493 (Senior Seminar); 2) general education survey courses; and 3) upper division electives.

Activities and methodology may vary year to year, as in the past, but probably within the overall core methodology described above. The diversity of course products and levels assessed provides valuable additional feedback to the program.

However, whatever courses are evaluated, whatever the assignment, and whatever SLOs are assessed the assessment will almost certainly be of written work - short papers, long papers, or short or longer essays or essay exams.

### **Performance Criteria**

The rubrics currently in use are available in a separate document. Most of the SLOs and most of the rubrics are relevant to all courses, but with more relevance for the more advanced courses. The expectations for different levels of achievement vary with the course level.

### **Interpreting and Evaluating Results**

See methodology, above.

### **Level of Performance Expected**

Our goal is that our students have achieved proficiency as measured in any assessment process. Realistically, our expectations are that approximately 75% of students who take our lower division courses will achieve at the Proficient level. At the upper division level, 85-90% is a realistic expectation.

## **IV. Curriculum Review**

Routine, periodic faculty discussions are undertaken to determine if students are gaining substantive knowledge in the various fields of history and the related skills, as reflected for example in the annual Assessment Reports. Expectations and guidelines for courses offered at both the lower and upper division levels are discussed and revised each year as part of the retreat or workshop activities.

Because of the limited number of upper level courses the program can offer in history, students are limited in the areas of possible study. However, the curriculum is designed to prepare students to engage in life-long learning on their own. The program continues its efforts to expand its offerings in areas not covered at the present time as staffing permits.

The formal annual assessment process assists us in curriculum review, both overall and especially regarding key courses and different levels of courses.

The Curriculum Map, provided separately, will be revised and updated every year as needed.

## **V. Communication about Assessment**

We are learning from the assessment process. Our faculty members are committed to assessment in multiple ways (see above) and to the annual assessment process as well. We will meet formally every fall to discuss the annual formal process and results, as well as our other informal and formal means of assessment. We will meet regularly to discuss and implement the changes needed.

	Demonstrate literacy - analytical reading and effective writing skills - in general, and for historical content	Demonstrate understanding of the history of historical writing, and demonstrate the ability to apply the principles and theories that support historical writing	Demonstrate knowledge of specific times and locations studied, and knowledge of the complexities of the past and the diversity of human cultures in those times and places	Apply the concepts of historical thinking -for example in evaluating change over time	Demonstrate skills in historical research, including historical analysis and interpretation
<b>HIST101: World Civilization to 1100</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  – Short essays</li> <li>  – Quizzes</li> <li>  – Unit quizzes</li> <li>  – Essay exams</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  – Short essays</li> <li>  – Quizzes</li> <li>  – Essay exams</li> <li>  – Class participation</li> </ul>	– All written and oral assignments	
<b>HIST102: World Civilization 1100 to 1800</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  – Short essays</li> <li>  – Quizzes</li> <li>  – Unit quizzes</li> <li>  – Essay exams</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  – Short essays</li> <li>  – Quizzes</li> <li>  – Essay exams</li> <li>  – Class participation</li> </ul>	– All written and oral assignments	
<b>HIST103: World Civilization Since 1800</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  – Short essays</li> <li>  – Quizzes</li> <li>  – Unit quizzes</li> <li>  – Essay exams</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  – Short essays</li> <li>  – Quizzes</li> <li>  – Essay exams</li> <li>  – Class participation</li> </ul>	– All written and oral assignments	
<b>HIST136: The Southwest U.S.</b>	– Paper		– Paper, Exam	– Paper, Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  – Quizzes</li> <li>  – Primary Document Analysis</li> </ul>

<b>HIST201: U.S. History I</b>	I – Short Essays I – Questions/Answers I – Quizzes I – Essay Exams		I – Short essays I – Quizzes on Primary Source Documents I – Essay Exams I – Class Participation I – Group Discussion	I – All written and oral assignments I – Primary source analysis I – Secondary source analysis	
<b>HIST202: U.S. History II</b>	I – Short Essays I – Questions/Answers I – Quizzes I – Essay Exams		I – Short essays I – Quizzes on Primary Source Documents I – Essay Exams I – Class Participation I – Group Discussion	I – All written and oral assignments I – Primary source analysis I – Secondary source analysis	
<b>HIST211 (now HIST312): Colorado History</b>					
<b>HIST246 (now HIST346): History of Mexico</b>	R – Paper, Exam, Quizzes		R – Paper, Exam, Quizzes, Presentations	R – Paper, Exam, Quizzes, Presentations	
<b>HIST300: Historiography</b>	R – Analytical Papers R – Quizzes R – Annotated bibliographies I – Historiographic essay	I to M – Historiographic essay	M – Quizzes R to M – Group Discussion R - Papers	R to M – All written and oral assignments R to M – Secondary source analysis	I to R – Bibliographies, Papers I to M – Research for historiographic essay
<b>HIST301: America to 1787</b>	R – Quizzes R – Essay Exams R – Class Participation R – Papers	I to R – Secondary source analysis	R to M – Essay Exams R to M – Class Participation R to M – Small group discussion	R – All written and oral assignments R – Class discussion R – Primary source analysis	I to R – Comparative Analysis Papers



				R – Secondary source analysis	
<b>HIST302: America, 1787-1877</b>	R – Quizzes R – Papers I to R – Oral presentations	I to R – Secondary source analysis	R to M – Class Participation R to M – Small group discussion	R – All written and oral assignments R – Class discussion R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis	I to R – Oral presentations
<b>HIST303: America, 1877-1945</b>	M – Paper	M – Papers I to R – Secondary source analysis	R – Exam R to M – Class discussion	M – Paper R to M – Class discussion	R - Paper
<b>HIST304: America, 1945-present</b>	M – Paper	M – Papers I to R – Secondary source analysis	R – Exam R to M – Class discussion	M – Paper R to M – Class discussion	
<b>HIST311: U.S. Foreign Policy</b>					
<b>HIST332: Ancient Rome</b>					

<b>HIST362: History of Russia</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis		R – Quizzes R – Discussion  R – Papers	R – Primary and secondary historical source analysis R – Papers	
<b>HIST372: History of Modern China</b>					
<b>HIST411: American Labor History</b>					
<b>HIST413: American West</b>					
<b>HIST414: Hollywood and History</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis		R – Quizzes R – Group discussion	R – Primary and secondary historical source analysis R – Papers	
<b>HIST415: Historical Biography</b>					

<b>HIST417: American Civil War</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Short essays	R – Secondary source analysis	R – Class participation R – Group discussion R – Papers I – Blogging I – Other multimedia assignments	R – Papers I – Blogging I – Other multimedia assignments	I – Blogging I – Other multimedia assignments
<b>HIST427: Women and Gender in European History</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Research paper	R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – All written assignments	M – Essay quizzes and exams	R – All written and oral assignments	R – Bib development assignments and paper
<b>HIST428/ WS428/ SOC428: Women and Work</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Paper	R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis	R – Quizzes R – Discussion	R – Primary and secondary historical source analysis R – Paper	
<b>HIST444: The Lincoln Brigades in the Spanish American War</b>	-----	-----	<b>Removed from catalog in 2012</b>	-----	-----
<b>HIST446: History of Empires, 500-1500</b>					

<b>HIST447: History of the Decline of Empires, 1500- present</b>					
<b>HIST456: Medieval Europe</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Research paper	R – All written assignments, and discussion	R – Quizzes R – Discussion	R – All written and oral assignments	R – Bib development assignments and paper
<b>HIST457: Early Modern Europe</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Research paper	R – all written assignments, and discussion	R – Quizzes R – Discussion	R – All written and oral assignments	R – Bib development assignments and paper
<b>HIST458: Modern Europe</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Research paper	R – all written assignments, and discussion	R – Quizzes R – Discussion	R – All written and oral assignments	R – Bib development assignments and paper
<b>HIST468: Military History</b>	R – Quizzes R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Research paper		R – Quizzes R – Discussion		

<b>HIST489: Borderlands</b>	M – Papers M – Group discussion M – Quizzes		M – Papers M – Group discussion M – Quizzes	M – Papers M – Group discussion M – Quizzes	
<b>HIST491: Special Topics</b>	R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R - Papers	R – Papers	R – Papers R – Group discussion R – Class participation	R – Papers R – Group discussion R – Class participation	
<b>HIST493: Seminar</b>	R – Primary source analysis R – Secondary source analysis R – Research paper R – Oral presentation	R to M – all assignments	R – Quizzes R – Discussion	R to M – All written and oral assignments	R – Bib development assignments and paper
<b>HIST498: Internship</b>	R to M – Primary source analysis R to M – Secondary source analysis I to M – Field experience		R to M – Primary source analysis R to M – Secondary source analysis I to M – Field experience	R to M – All written and oral assignments I to M – Field experience	I to M – Field Experience

**Level:**

I = Introduce  
R = Reinforce  
M = Master

**Means:**

Exams  
Short Essays  
Oral Presentations  
Blogging  
Other Multimedia Assignments  
Field Experience  
Research Paper  
Historiographic Essay

Primary Source Analysis  
Secondary Source Analysis  
Group Discussion  
Class Participation  
Quizzes