

Program: History BA and BS

Completed by: Judy E. Gaughan

Assessment Contributors (other faculty involved in this program assessment): Fawn Amber Montoya, Brigid Vance

I. Program student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessed in this cycle, processes, results, and recommendations.

Comment on procedure: In last year's assessment, the assessment committee discovered that "We had unusual divergence in faculty evaluations of the same material, which seem to reflect different interpretations of the SLOs and rubrics [see comment "F" on 2013-2014 report]." This year the Program Coordinator created a rubric that began to deconstruct the SLOs so that subordinate categories for each rubric could be evaluated to identify where the strengths and weaknesses of the program's pedagogy might lay.

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle?	B. When was this SLO last assessed?	C. What method was used for assessing the SLO?	D. Who was assessed?	E. What is the expected achievement level and how many students should be at it?	F. What were the results of the assessment ?	G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?	H. What changes/improvements are planned based on this assessment?
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<p>(#1) Demonstrate literacy— analytical reading and effective writing skills— in general, and for historical content.</p>	<p>Not previously assessed</p>	<p>Three faculty members read and evaluated student papers in the required Historiography course using a rubric created by the Program Coordinator. (see comment above this table)</p> <p>It is attached.</p>	<p>All students with a “C” or better in HIST 300 Historiography, Fall 2014.</p> <p>Note: students must earn a “C” or retake the course to satisfy graduation requirements .</p>	<p>80% of the students should perform at ‘proficient’ or better for this SLO, as measured on the attached rubrics.</p>	<p>67% of students were proficient or exemplary in Analytical Reading. 56 % of students were proficient or exemplary in Writing for Historical Content. 44% of students were proficient or exemplary in writing in general.</p>	<p>A majority of students are achieving our goals on two parts of this SLO. A significant minority, however, are not.</p> <p>Many students need more training in effective writing in general.</p> <p>It should be noted, however, that while there were some real weaknesses here there were also more scored of exemplary in SLO #1 than in either SLO #2 or SLO #5.</p>	<p>Continue to emphasize writing in history courses at all levels.</p> <p>Maintain high expectations of student literacy in general and in the discipline of History.</p>
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<p>(#2) Demonstrate understanding of the history of historical writing, and demonstrate the ability to apply the principles and theories that support historical writing.</p>	<p>Spring 2013</p>	<p>Three faculty members read and evaluated student papers in the required Historiography course using a rubric created by the Program Coordinator. (see comment above this table)</p> <p>It is attached.</p>	<p>All students with a "C" or better in HIST 300 Historiography, Fall 2014.</p> <p>Note: students must earn a "C" or retake the course to satisfy graduation requirements</p>	<p>80% of the students should perform at 'proficient' or better for this SLO, as measured on the attached rubrics.</p>	<p>67% of students were proficient in understanding of History. 56 % of students were proficient in understanding historical writing. 33% of students were proficient in demonstrating the abilities to apply the principles and theories that support historical writing</p>	<p>A majority of students are achieving our goals on two parts of this SLO. A significant minority, however, are not.</p> <p>Here we can see more than 50% of our students at a logical developmental stage: they understand history and historical writing but the more sophisticated acts of applying principles and theories have been accomplished by only three of the 9 students evaluated.</p>	<p>Recommendations for improvement are contingent upon program faculty agreement with said recommendations.</p> <p>The department faculty should discuss ways to (1) assist the minority of students who are still in the emerging phase of understanding history and historical writing while at the same time (2) facilitating more sophisticated thinking among those students who are ready to move to the next stage of intellectual development in Historical thinking and the exercise of history.</p>
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(#5) Demonstrate skills in historical research, including historical analysis and interpretation .	Spring 2014	Three faculty members read and evaluated student papers in the required Historiography course using a rubric created by the Program Coordinator. (see comment above this table) It is attached.	All students with a “C” or better in HIST 300 Historiography, Fall 2014. Note: students must earn a “C” or retake the course to satisfy graduation requirements .	80% of the students should perform at ‘proficient’ or better for this SLO, as measured on the attached rubrics.	78% of students were proficient or exemplary in historical research. 56% of students were proficient in analysis and interpretation of the historical research	Approximately 80% of our students are where we hope they would be in the practice of historical research while a simple majority are where we would like them to be in the critical application of that research.	Recommendations for improvement are contingent upon program faculty agreement with said recommendations. In terms of the skill of research, we have almost achieved our goal for proficiency and we should continue to teach this skill as we have been. In terms of analysis and interpretation, the faculty should consider providing more emphasis on critical thinking.
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Comments: ***History students must meet the same expectations for the historiography course regardless of the degree program (B.A. or B.S.), or if they are a major or a minor. Professors do not distinguish between degree programs in their syllabi, assignments, etc.**

See below after the “Follow-up” table for additional comments.

B. Follow-up (closing the loop) on results and activities from previous assessment cycles. In this section, please describe actions taken during this cycle that were based on, or implemented to address, the results of assessment from previous cycles.

A. What SLO(s) did you address?	B. When was this SLO last assessed?	C. What were the recommendations for change from the previous assessment?	D. Were the recommendations for change acted upon? If not, why?	E. What were the results of the changes? If the changes were not effective, what are the next steps or the new recommendations?
(#1) Demonstrate literacy— analytical reading and effective writing skills— in general, and for historical content.	Not previously assessed	N/A	N/A	N/A
(#2) Demonstrate understanding of the history of historical writing, and demonstrate the ability to apply the principles and theories that support historical writing.	Spring 2013	2013 Assessment plan unavailable.	N/A	See comment below this table
(#5) Demonstrate skills in historical research, including	Spring 2014	2) Provide more emphasis on choice of source materials, and analysis of those source materials; 3) Provide more emphasis on articulating arguments.	2-3) The courses evaluated for AY 2013-2014 were upper division electives. The course evaluated for AY 2014-2015 was Historiography. A greater	See comment below this table

historical analysis and interpretation.		4) Work among faculty so that all SLOs are a conscious part of the teaching and learning interactions. See the above SLO in this column for further improvements planned for the History Program	percentage of time and energy in this course is generally dedicated to the skills of the Historian. 4) Some faculty members included SLOs on their syllabi and assignments.	
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The assessments are turning out to be a useful tool for the History Program and two items need to be addressed.

- 1) We need to go forward with the recommendation from last year that we meet and determine whether we are in agreement about what our expectations are, in other words, about what each SLO means. This will be facilitated by the program faculty's commitment to regular monthly meetings. A discussion regarding our agreement about the meaning of SLOs was not achieved in AY 2014-2015 because the recommendation fell through the cracks with the departure of 1/3rd of our regular faculty, including two Program Coordinators. This discussion will be facilitated by the drafting of a more specific SLO-rating rubric that can be evaluated and amended by the faculty as a whole and employed next year and in the coming years and that will be made available on the History folder in the I-Drive.
- 2) The History faculty are dedicated to facilitating our students' achievements in all of our stated SLOs. In some sense, such achievements are absolute and can be and should be measured in absolute terms. On the other hand, our students enter the University at remarkably different levels and so our skills at teaching our students should take into account not just the absolute skills of research and writing but also the improvement of individual students in this regard. Just as one example, the author of this assessment report had a student in the Spring 2015 who had been a student in the Fall of 2013. Had this student been evaluated using the attached rubric, the absolute evaluation would have shown her as "emerging" in SLO #1 and yet her writing has improved dramatically since 2013 when she could not formulate a clear sentence. Next year the History Program plans to evaluate students' capstone seminar papers. All of these students will have taken HIST 300 and many of them will have taken the course that was used in this year's evaluation. In 2015-2016 we intend to explore individual development as well as absolute achievement in the field of History. This will give us an even better sense of the program's needs regarding the achievements of our students. Thus, the real completion of this year's assessment will take place next year. We also intend to keep on file papers from all of our students in both Historiography (HIST 300) and Seminar (HIST 493) so our assessments can be more specific and more useful.