

Program: History **Date:** September 30, 2015 **Completed by:** Matt Harris

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

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? Please fully describe the student group.	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?
"Be able to demonstrate skills in historical research and analysis and to defend their conclusions in well-written papers." (#3)	2012	Review of aggregate data from all MA theses. Each thesis is approximately 150-200 pages with extensive footnotes. Skills evaluated include: 1. argument 2. evidence 3. citation	All five of our thesis writers were evaluated, that is, every student who ever wrote a thesis for us. Each student defended the thesis then	It is expected that each student will demonstrate a proficiency of research and writing commensurate with graduate-level work. Proficiency is determined by the following rubric: 4.0 outstanding; 3.0 above	Faculty discussed the data during MA thesis defenses and discussed a list of areas to strengthen in the future; all students were in the proficient range. One student was in the "A" range; the	Students did very well with primary research. The writing was clear and the citations were standard for MA theses. Overall, students did a nice job laying out their arguments, then supporting them	--spend more time in seminar discussing the secondary literature, and then model for students how to integrate this literature into historical papers. --have students identify pertinent historiographies and then discuss how their work fits into the larger literature. --faculty can pay more attention in seminar to help students identify opposing

		4. bib. 5. diction 6. writing nuance 7. conclusion 8. depth of primary research 9. coherent timeline 10. demonstrate change over time	graduated .	average; 2.0 acceptable; 1.0 deficient. Proficiency is anything above a 2.0 or a "B" grade or better. The committee expects the following: --15% will be in the 4.0 or "A" range --40% will be in the 3.0 or high "B" range --45% will be in the 2.0 or "B" range	remaining four students were in the high "B" range (recall that we evaluated 5 MA theses)	with crisp, clear evidence. About three of the students could do a better job integrating relevant secondary literature into the thesis and also situating their work within a broader historical context. Four out of the five students struggled to work into their theses counter evidence that challenges their argument.	viewpoints in their papers. This can be done in small-group sessions, where students have to explain to peers how the literature might undercut their arguments. --more in-class peer review to establish organization flow and development, especially with introductions and conclusions. --continued emphasis on the RAGE program to assist students
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Comments: Regrettably, this is the last time the MA program will do an assessment report. Because of budget cuts, buyouts, and faculty seeking employment elsewhere, the History program has lost over fifty percent of its faculty the past two years. The History Program can no longer staff its graduate program, much less offer the quality education that students expect and deserve. Faculty, with Dean and Chair support, made a recommendation in April 2014 to NOT accept new applications for fall 2014, thereby allowing the program to idle. Reopening the program was contingent upon the program replacing lost faculty lines. At this writing this has yet to occur. Therefore, the History program will make a formal

recommendation to the Dean and Provost in August 2016 to terminate the program. For two years now, the program has not accepted new applications. The program expects to end the program when MA students finish in the spring 2016.

While this is regrettable, faculty aver that the History program is better served focusing its limited resources on the undergraduate program, where staffing levels are also a problem. This being said, MA students have performed very well in the program. In recent years, the program has graduated a number of students, many of whom have found employment in the public schools, earned admittance to PhD programs, and found employment in museums and in archival management. This summer, in fact, one of the program's outstanding students was admitted into a PhD program in history at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, one of the preeminent institutions of higher learning in the UK.

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?
"Be able to demonstrate skills in historical research and analysis and to defend their conclusions in well-written papers." (#3)	2012	<p>--spend more time in seminar discussing arguments; model effective papers</p> <p>--have students identify arguments in their paper by highlighting or bolding them</p> <p>--spend more time discussing the difference between an argument and a statement of purpose, in both class and private consultations.</p> <p>--spend more time on</p>	Faculty acted upon them and achieved good results. Of the students evaluated in this assessment cycle, all of them improved on the SLOs in question.	<p>The most obvious result is that student learned how to write more critically and succinctly. In addition, they improved their ability to make historical arguments, which undergirds all sound historical writing.</p> <p>Students not only produced better MA theses—a result of faculty attention to the weaknesses addressed in previous assessment reports—but many of them presented portions of their work at various conferences in the United States. One graduate student even presented in England.</p>

		<p>document analysis. Faculty will develop exercises separate from the paper to accomplish this.</p> <p>--more in-class peer review to establish organization flow and development, especially with introductions and conclusions.</p> <p>--more emphasis on the RAGE program to assist students</p>		
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Comments: Three years ago we assessed a similar skill set but did so with graduate seminar papers. This time we assessed the same skill set (or SLO) but used the MA theses to make critical judgments about what our students are doing well and where they need improvement. We found that over the course of the three years the students' writing improved and, most critically, they improved their ability to make historical arguments, which the committee found lacking during the first evaluation period. Virtually every student we evaluated who wrote the MA thesis passed in the mid-3 range (above-average), with one student scoring in the 4 (or outstanding) range. Unquestionably, this reflects faculty attention to the deficiencies outlined in the previous assessment report.

History Program
Colorado State University-Pueblo
Skills in Research and Literacy Rubric

Intended learning outcome assessed with this instrument: Students should be able to write complex prose, with correct grammar. They should be able to draft original works of research consistent with Master's level work. Student papers should follow Turabian or the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Student work assessed: MA theses
Proficiency is anything above a 2.0

	Outstanding 4.0	Above average 3.0	Acceptable 2.0	Deficient 1.0
Presence of a clear and compelling thesis that makes a claim	Claim is explicit, and refers to scholarship and/or theory	Claim is explicit and reasoned but does not always make references to scholarship and/or theory	Claim is explicit but appears as statement of purpose rather than argument	Claim is implied and/or unsophisticated
Reference to relevant evidence and reasoning	Detailed and specific; includes rationale for conclusion. Explains why and how conclusion reached	Good use of evidence and sources. Provides rationale for conclusion.	Adequate information about evidence and sources	Limited information about evidence and sources
Analysis and evaluation of evidence	Clear organization and provides strong interpretive analysis	Provides good interpretive analysis with some narration	Adequate interpretive analysis with mostly narration	Uses narration without applying cogent interpretation or analysis
Clear and engaging writing style	Vivid, compelling language and artful organization supporting analysis	Consistently clear language and sequencing of organization and analysis	Adequate language with some infelicitous language; organization and analysis generally good	Sometimes vague, confusing or hard to follow; organization and analysis poor
Appropriate and correct use of the Turabian style manual for references	Correct usage throughout paper	Proficient use	Adequate use with some mistakes	Multiple mistakes
Appropriate use of research techniques	Uses relevant secondary material. Selected material reflects an understanding of relevant literature	Uses a selection of relevant secondary material, but has not taken advantage of different types of search tools	Uses a selection of relevant primary and secondary material, but is missing some important sources	Omits some significant secondary material or ignores some material contrary to thesis