

Assessment Plan: History Program
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Chair: Dr. Matt Harris
Program Coordinator: Beatrice Spade

Description of the History Program:

The history program is housed within the Department of History, Political Science, Philosophy, and Geography. At present, the history program has four full-time tenured faculty members, one half-time professor teaching in the spring semester only and due to retire after the spring of 2011, a tenure-track faculty member assigned to the Chicano Studies program, two lecturers, and two adjuncts, with a Visiting Assistant Professor to join the program in fall 2010. There are approximately 130 undergraduate majors, 30 graduate students, and 12 minors currently in the program. Approximately 600 students are enrolled each semester in history as part of the general education curriculum.

The history program offers a major—BA & BS, a major with social science secondary education certification--BS, a minor, and a Master's degree program. History is a requirement in the general education curriculum of the University, and the program provides courses for students in the Liberal Arts Program, the ROTC program, Woman's studies, Chicano studies, and Business.

Institutional and Program Mission

Colorado State University-Pueblo mission statement: "Colorado State University-Pueblo is committed to excellence, setting the standard for regional comprehensive universities in teaching, research and service by providing leadership and access for its region while maintaining its commitment to diversity."

College of Humanities and Social Sciences 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."

Institutional Strategic Plan And Program Mission

Colorado State University—strategic plan:

The University strategic plan for the 2008-11 period calls for "student-centered excellence in teaching and learning, its contributions of research and its ability of enhance the quality of life for all of the people it serves." Diversity forms a key element in the strategic plan of the

University, a Hispanic serving institution. The seven initiatives of the University appear below in the College's strategic plan.

College of Humanities and Social Sciences strategic plan:

Initiative 1: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

CHASS will maintain a commitment to academic excellence.

Goal: Enhance academic excellence through comprehensive teaching development and assessment processes and program review, including ongoing review of these processes.

Goal: Set and maintain appropriate expectations for research, scholarly, and creative activities among faculty.

Goal: Increase support for research, scholarly and creative activities and for faculty and staff development.

Goal: Develop new academic programs to respond to emerging work force and professional needs of the state and broader region.

Goal: Increase the percentage of FT tenure-track faculty.

Goal: Hire and retain high-quality faculty.

Initiative 2: STUDENT ACCESS AND SUCCESS

CHASS will prioritize student success by creating an environment that promotes student academic, social, and personal development.

Goal: Provide high-quality, accurate academic student advising.

Goal: Foster student retention by promoting student involvement in campus life.

Goal: Develop and implement a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program to ensure that specific writing competencies have been met prior to graduation.

Goal: Emphasize the development of critical thinking in curricula within CHASS.

Goal: Support the recruitment of quality students and participate in such endeavors as needed.

Initiative 3: DIVERSITY

CHASS will strive to create and maintain an environment that reflects regional diversity and global citizenship.

Goal: Create a culture that supports diversity among students, faculty, and staff.

Goal: Develop curricula that implement issues of diversity that historically, socially, and culturally contextualize the contemporary world enabling students to more fully participate as global citizens.

Goal: Recognize and support the university's special role as a Hispanic Serving Institution.

Initiative 4: IMAGE BUILDING

CHASS will secure its reputation in southern Colorado as the academic and cultural resource for the arts and social sciences.

Goal: Promote the college's role in general education.

Goal: Improve public internal and external representation of departments.

Goal: Highlight CHASS programs emphasizing the arts, cultural activities, and special departmental activities.

Initiative 5: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CHASS will be recognized as a partner in community asset and resource building.

Goal: Maintain existing opportunities and develop new opportunities for community and regional engagement as an academic and cultural resource.

Goal: Utilize university assets (intellectual, academic, economic, social, etc.) to serve the local and regional community and to centralize these efforts.

Goal: Develop and support existing promotional efforts to strengthen relationship between the university and community.

Initiative 6: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

CHASS will allocate its resources through strategic management, based on college and department goals, facility and technology needs, and faculty and staff planning.

Goal: Assess and advocate for improved faculty and classroom technology and facility needs.

Goal: Collaborate with the library faculty to improve learning resources.

Goal: Assess and advocate for improved college facilities.

Goal: Achieve salary equity for all employees of CHASS.

Goal: Provide support for research, scholarly and creative activities and for faculty and staff development.

Initiative 7: SHARED GOVERNANCE

CHASS will engage in both the spirit and the letter of shared governance practiced by the university.

Goal: Encourage and recognize appropriate faculty and student representation on relevant and varied committees.

Goal: Promote professional rights and responsibilities of faculty.

Goal: Improve APR and performance communication.

Goal: Strengthen communication among students, staff, faculty, and administration.

Goal: Achieve optimum collaboration among faculty, administration, and students in decision-making processes.

Department and Program mission and strategic plan dovetail with those of the college and University. Academic excellence, student access and success, diversity, image building, community engagement, resource management, and shared governance are areas in which the history program is actively engaged.

Goals and Objectives

Program Goals

- To provide students with a general knowledge of history and historical methodology;
- To prepare students, through training in communication skills and in research methods, to gain knowledge of a given area of history;
- To prepare students to continue personal study and learning about specific subject areas in the discipline on an independent basis;
- To prepare students to engage in critical thinking; and
- To introduce students to the theoretical frameworks that serve as the foundation of historical scholarship.

In addition the history program is committed to community engagement, diversity, image building, resource management, and shared governance.

Student Learning Outcomes

The learning outcome goals of the history program for students to:

- 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.

Outcome Assessment Activities for the History Program

The history program assesses the need for program improvement in the following ways:

- An alumni survey is conducted every five years to determine if the program has provided its students with the tools necessary for their professional and individual development on a long-term basis.
- The MFAT (Major Field Achievement Test) is administered every two years to measure the historical knowledge of CSU-Pueblo history majors against a national norm.
- A program evaluation is conducted every two years seeking input from those history majors who are about to graduate about the strengths and weaknesses of the program.
- An annual portfolio review of papers from two of the program's core courses—historiography and seminar-- is conducted to evaluate whether the goals of the program stated above have been achieved and to assure that there is consistency across courses regardless of the instructor.
- A retreat is held annually to discuss the results of the assessment activities and to map the direction of the program over the next five year period.
- Every five years, a formal program review is conducted drawing on the expertise of an outside evaluator who offers suggestions for improvements in the program.
- Community intern directors are asked for an assessment of the history majors that they oversee to determine if the program is providing students with the skills needed for on-site professional development.
- Results from either the Praxis or Place test provide information about student success rates in the History Education Track.
- Teacher evaluations of student teaching provide further information to help us assess needs to the students in the History Education Track.
- The program is developing a check list of "Student Learning Outcomes". Once these learning outcomes have full approval from the faculty, courses in the program will be examined to see which of these outcomes of student learning are supported

Curriculum

Routine, periodic faculty discussions are undertaken to determine if students are gaining substantive knowledge in the various fields of history. Expectations and guidelines for courses offered at both the lower and upper division are discussed and revised each year as part of the retreat activities. Because of the limited number of upper level and graduate 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.

Future Considerations

The program is developing a curriculum map that will demonstrate that courses meet the program's outcomes and provide students the opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. This activity is almost complete at this time and will be part of the retreat discussion over the summer.