

Undergraduate Academic Assessment Plan 2012-2013

History

College of Liberal Arts &
Sciences

March 2013

History, CLAS

Undergraduate Academic Assessment Plan

Mission Statement

The History Department provides important skills to its students in analytical reading, critical thinking and writing, and reconstructing the past through the use of primary source evidence and established scholarship. As active scholars themselves, the History Department's faculty shares their intellectual mission with students by constructing a battery of challenging courses that offer a wide variety of geographical, chronological, and methodological approaches. Over time, history students develop the ability to analyze complex problems and provide solutions through a combination of research and writing; this expertise goes far beyond the particular content of their field of study to inform the student's interaction with historical, contemporary, and future problems. By introducing students to the world of historical scholarship in the History Practicum, requiring writing assignments that help develop and polish persuasive writing in a diverse range of classes, and providing students the opportunity to analyze, synthesize, and reconstruct the past themselves in the capstone Senior Seminar, the History Department allows students from all backgrounds to acquire this critical set of skills in a rigorous, but supportive, academic environment.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' mission is "to lead the academic quest to understand our place in the universe" and "to ensure equitable access for all of its constituencies present, drawing strength from our rich heritage of racial, ethnic and gender diversity." The University of Florida's mission is to create the "broadly diverse environment necessary to foster multi-cultural skills and perspectives in its teaching and research for its students to contribute and succeed in the world of the 21st century." The History Department contributes to these goals by doing more than simply providing access to a finite body of knowledge concerning the past; it empowers students at the University of Florida to refine those analytical qualities of critical thinking and expression necessary to succeed in their chosen educational, professional, or vocational field. The Department thus weds the intellectual talent, experience, and energy of its faculty with students' needs to acquire essential skills that will serve them over a lifetime of personal, educational, and vocational challenges. In doing so, it is solidly in line with the Florida Board of Governors' strategic plan

for the University of Florida that “nurtures young people from diverse backgrounds to address the needs of our societies while creating new knowledge and the pursuit of new ideas.” By analyzing the past, then, UF’s history students hone abilities that can improve their futures as well as those of the citizens of Florida, the nation, and the world.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/liberalarts/alc/history.aspx>

Research Skills (Critical Thinking)

1. Acquire and apply basic research skills learned through use of print and electronic resources of the library and web

Critical Analysis (Critical Thinking, Communication)

2. Critically assess and interpret primary and secondary sources
3. Create and develop historical arguments using evidence effectively with clear prose

Critical Expression (Critical Thinking, Communication)

4. Produce an effectively written analytical research paper based in research of primary sources, framed within the secondary literature, and offering a coherent historical argument supported by the evidence

Curriculum Map

Curriculum Map for:

Program History

College College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Key: Introuced

Reinforced

Assessed

Courses SLOs	HIS 3942: History Practicum	AMH 3- 4000, 6 credits	EUH 3- 4000, 6 credits	AFH, ASH, LAH 3- 4000, 6 credits	AMH, AFH, ASH, EUH, HIS, LAH, WOH 3- 4000, 15 credits	AMH, AFH, ASH, HIS, LAH 4930: Senior Seminar
Research (Critical Thinking)						
#1	I, A – skills set exam	R	R	R	R	A – capstone statement
Critical Analysis (Critical Thinking, Communication)						
#2	I, A – skills set exam	R	R	R	R	A – capstone statement
#3	I, A – skills set exam	R	R	R	R	A – capstone statement
Critical Expression (Critical Thinking, Communication)						
#4	I	R	R	R	R	A – capstone statement

Assessment Cycle

Program History

College College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Analysis and Interpretation:

August-September

Improvement Actions:

Completed by October 1

Dissemination:

Completed by October 1

*Because these are fully revised SLO's, we do not have the same assessment data from 2010-11

SLOs	Year	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
Research (Critical Thinking)						
#1		√	√	√	√	√
Critical Analysis (Critical Thinking, Communication)						
#2		√	√	√	√	√
#3		√	√	√	√	√
Critical Expression (Critical Thinking, Communication)						
#4		√	√	√	√	√

Methods and Procedures

The department of history utilizes **direct** assessment methods as follows:

Student Learning Outcome

Acquire and apply basic historical research tools learned through use of library finding aids and web resources

Critically assess and interpret primary and secondary sources

Assessment Method

Skills Set Exam
Capstone Statement

Skills Set Exam
Capstone statement

Create and develop historical arguments

Skills Set Exam
Capstone statement

Produce an effectively written paper based in research of primary sources, framed within secondary literature, and offering a coherent historical argument supported by the evidence

Capstone Statement

I. Skills-Set Exam for HIS 3942 History Practicum

Beginning in the fall of 2012, the history department will begin administering a **skills-set exam** at the conclusion of each semester's HIS 3942 Practicum courses that will be reviewed by the Assessment Committee.

Each student enrolled in the introductory Practicum course will take a Skills-Set Exam in which they are examined on skills including: distinguishing between and analyzing primary and secondary sources, recognizing historiographical trends, developing historical arguments, reading critically, and evaluating research resources available in the library and online. The exam will not be part of the student's grade and should not include the student's name or any identification. The instructor will administer this exam before the final week of class and deliver them directly to the Assessment Committee.

II. AFH/AMH/ASH/EUH/HIS/ LAH 4930 Senior Seminar Assessment for Capstone Statement:

Each student enrolled in the Senior Seminar will provide a 250-word Capstone Statement in which they describe their major research project, including research method (SLO 1), sources used (SLO 2), the major argument of paper (SLO 3), and a summary of the paper findings (SLO 4). This document will not be a part of the student's grade and should not include the student's name or any identification. The instructor will collect these Capstone Statements before the final week of class and deliver them directly to the Assessment Committee. Each document must include the following components:

1. A clear description of the research project, which includes both a brief account of the historiographical context of the project as well as the student's historical argument (SLO 1, 2, 3).
2. A narrative account of the project that includes its chronological, geographical, and thematic contours (SLO 2, 4).
3. A summary of both the primary and secondary sources that the student will/did employ in order to provide evidence for the narrative and argument components of the project. (SLO 2, 4)

Rubric for Capstone Statement to evaluate critical thinking and communication:

	Excellent Mastery	Satisfactory Mastery	No Mastery
Student frames research questions in a thoughtful, critical manner	Identified topic of manageable scope for research, based on a question or problem for analysis	Identified a topic of research, but one that too ambitious or too narrow for the argument	Did not develop an appropriate topic for research
Student creates and develops a coherent historical argument	Paper addresses a clearly-stated & logically formulated historical question that focuses on critical analysis rather than mere description	Paper address a historical question that can be identified, but focus shifts between analysis and mere description; may have vague, unsupported assertions	No identifiable historical question; paper offers broad, unsupported generalizations or descriptions
Student substantiates historical arguments with well chosen and persuasive evidence and appropriate framing within key historical events or time period related to topic	Paper displays clear chronological understanding of events & complex grasp of causation; situates questions within larger contexts; reflects on larger themes that inform specific events or processes	Sound chronological framework; good causal analysis but focuses on factors that shaped events, without discussion of broader themes or significance	Paper explores its subject in a historical vacuum with little commentary on causation, context, and larger themes

Student critically assesses and interprets primary and secondary sources

Situated the research topic in appropriate primary & secondary sources; demonstrates awareness of authors, historical context of sources; thorough and fair-minded assessment of secondary literature

Cites and assesses at least two different interpretations from secondary literature; makes an effort to place his/her own work in reference to those interpretations

Minimal engagement with primary sources; little or no awareness of interpretive differences within secondary literature

Assessment Oversight

See page 7 of the “Developing an Undergraduate Academic Assessment Plan” guide.

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