**Undergraduate Academic Assessment Plan**

History

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

May 2012

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’s 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)**

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

**Critical Expression (Critical Thinking, Communication)**

1. 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: **I**ntroduced **R**einforced **A**ssessed

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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 & course completion rates | R | R | R | R | A – final project, course completion rates |
| Critical Analysis (Critical Thinking, Communication) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| #2 | I,  A – skills set exam & course completion rates | R | R | R | R | A - final project, course completion rates |
| #3 | I,  A - skills set exam & course completion rates | R | R | R | R | A - final project, course completion rates |
| Critical Expression (Critical Thinking, Communication) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| #4 | I | R | R | R | R | A - final project, course completion rates |

# 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 assessment data from 2010-11

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year  SLOs | 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 seeks an appropriate balance of **direct** and **indirect** assessment methods as follows:

To assess the effectiveness of the HIS 3942 Practicum course, the Assessment Committee will review **course completion rates** based on an analysis of final grades from all the sections of the course (3 sections per semester/ 6 per year). Please see below for assessment details. As well, beginning in the fall of 2012, the history department will also begin administering a **skills-set exam** at the conclusion of each semester’s HIS 3942 Practicum courses that will also be reviewed by the Assessment Committee.

To assess the effectiveness of the AFH/AMH/ASH/EUH/HIS/LAH 4930 senior seminars, the Assessment Committee will meet each semester to review the **capstone statements** produced by all enrolled students in the seminars. As well, the Assessment Committee will review **course completion rates** based on an analysis of final grades from all sections of the course (6 sections per semester/ 12 per year). Please see below for assessment details and the grading rubric for the capstone statement.

**I. Method for Analysis of Course Completion Rates in HIS 3942 and 4930:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | **Assessment Method** | **Targeted Outcome** | **Results** | **Use of Results for Improving Student Learning** |
| Acquire and apply basic historical research tools learned through use of library finding aids and web resources | Completion of HIS 3942 or 4930 with passing grade of B- or better | 85-90% successful completion rate in HIS 3942; 95-100% successful completion rate in HIS 4930 | 85-90% of enrolled students in HIS 3942 met the SLO and should move on successfully to upper division history courses | Student performance confirms that rubrics for this course are on target for the SLO |
| Critically assess and interpret primary and secondary sources | Completion of HIS 3942 or 4930 with passing grade of B- or better | 85-90% successful completion rate in HIS 3942; 95-100% successful completion rate in HIS 4930 | 85-90% of enrolled students in HIS 3942 met the SLO and should move on successfully to upper division history courses | As above, student performance confirms that rubrics for this course are on target for the SLO |
| Create and develop historical arguments | Completion of HIS 3942 or 4930 with passing grade of B- or better | 85-90% successful completion rate in HIS 3942; 95-100% successful completion rate in HIS 4930 | 85-90% of enrolled students in HIS 3942 met the SLO and should move on successfully to upper division history courses | As above, student performance confirms that rubrics for this course are on target for the SLO |
| 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 | Completion of AFH/ AMH/ ASH/ EUH/HIS/LAH 4930 with passing grade of B- or better | 95-100% successful completion rate | 95-100% of students met SLO in marshalling, evaluating, and synthesizing evidence in support of an original argument reflective of critical thinking | Successful outcomes in papers found to be a good measure for students proceeding on to graduate schools and professional school programs |

**II. Skills-Set Exam for HIS 3942 History Practicum**

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.

**III. AFH/AMH/ASH/EUH/HIS/ LAH 4930 Senior Seminar Assessment Rubric 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)

# Assessment Oversight

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

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