

Model Course/Program Outcomes Guide

May 2011

Directions: Please complete this form to document your progress toward improving student learning. For each item, indicate your progress and your anticipated next steps. Thank you!

Course/Program Title: History 101

Course/Program Team: Andrew Keyser, Tom Clemens

Expected Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Identify and evaluate primary and secondary source materials and demonstrate an understanding of their historical context and relevance; Recognize bias and its impact upon the value of the source; Extract valid and valuable information from the source.
- 2) Recognize important trends and themes in human cultural, economic, political and ideological development; Identify and evaluate the impact of these historical trends upon global development.

Assessment

A source analysis assessment of ten questions was designed and was first utilized in the fall of 2009. Students read sections that were taken from primary source materials and were asked to answer questions that required them to carefully analyze and interpret what they read. All questions, with the exception of one, are based entirely upon reading analysis and do not require any outside historical knowledge. Students are given this assessment on the first day of the semester but are not told the correct answers. They are given the same assessment at the end of the semester. An on-line version of this assessment was launched in the fall of 2010.

Validation

The validation for this assessment was internal. Questions were designed to assess the first outcome of the course.

Results

Assessment scores have improved through the course of the semester in every class in which the assessment was utilized. The average score for the pre-semester assessment (from the Fall of 2009 through the Spring of 2011) was 4.4 out of 10 correct. The average score for the post-semester assessment over the same period of time was 6 out of 10 correct. The data is still being analyzed to determine specific correlations, but it does appear to be evidence that student analysis skills are improving as a result of the course.

Follow-up

The post semester assessment score is still lower than we would like. Changes have been made to strengthen the development of analysis skills including more frequent assessments throughout the semester and activities within the classroom that require the use of critical thinking skills. The common assessment may be redeveloped within the coming year to allow for a more focused result.

Budget Justification

The design of appropriate assessments to evaluate critical analysis and critical thinking skills is difficult. Professional development money will be necessary for conferences and support materials that will aid in this process.