

## Program Outcomes Guide

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

**Course/Program Title:** History

**Date:** May, 2017

**Course/Program Team:** Drs. Timothy Jenness and Lore Kuehnert

### Expected Learning Outcomes

- 1) The student will be able to evaluate different types of sources to determine their credibility and will demonstrate the ability to interpret them in an organized and creative form.
- 2) The student will be able to identify important themes and historical trends and evaluate their historical significance and relevance to current events, modern culture and ideology.
- 3) The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of cultures outside of those in which they live and identify the historical problems created by failures to accept diversity.

### Assessment (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome?)

HIS 202 is the final course in the program's survey sequence (HIS 101, 102, 201). Students taking this course must complete a significant research assignment that requires them to synthesize evidence from primary and secondary sources. This project enables students to demonstrate the degree to which they have learned and internalized standard methodologies used in the discipline. A common assessment rubric is applied to measure each student's final submission.

### Validation (What methods have you used or will you use to validate your assessment?)

The program assessment is reviewed periodically by the fulltime faculty, both of whom hold terminal degrees in history and have more than twenty-six years of combined teaching experience at the college level. Internal validation includes analysis of the data collected, as well as comparisons between the assessment data and the outcomes of other types of exercises assigned in this course. The results from the assessment typically yield data that is consistent from semester to semester. External validation derives from the alignment of the assessment tools with standards set by the American Historical Association in the 2013 Tuning core document, "History Discipline Core" (<http://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/current-projects/tuning>).

### Results (What do your assessment data show? If you have not yet assessed student achievement of your learning outcomes, when is assessment planned?)

A score of three or higher was necessary for a student to achieve the desired outcome. The results for the academic year 2016-2017 follow:

**Fall 2016:**

	Outcome #1:	Outcome #2:	Outcome #3:
Class Average:	3.13/5	3.5/5	2.88/5
% with 3 or higher:	75%	100%	50%
<b>Spring 2017:</b>			
Class Average:	3.44/5	3.75/5	3.31/5
% with 3 or higher:	87.5%	100%	75%

**Follow-up** (How have you used or how will you use the data to improve student learning?)

Overall scores for the current academic year continue to reflect normal fluctuation. Despite the larger statistical sample in the spring semester, however, students' scores improved over the fall's results for a couple of reasons. HIS 202 is a requirement for history majors and a general education option for non-majors. In the spring, 62.5% of the enrolled students were program majors, an unusually high number. Accordingly, they would be expected to perform at a higher level than their non-major peers. Secondly, faculty spent more classroom time in the spring discussing research and writing strategies in an effort to nurture the collaborative environment typical in graduate-level research cohorts.

The historical question posed to students for their research paper is broad enough to encourage vertical and horizontal discovery and specific enough to require them to focus on the process of historical research. The assignment encourages students to look at the third outcome but does not mandate it. Placing too many restrictions on students' research design limits opportunities to synthesize content and process. As always, the ongoing instructional challenge in this course rests on the fact that most students are not history majors and as such often lack the appropriate training that students majoring in the discipline tend to possess. The research assignment and ancillary scaffolding provide students with fundamental training in project and time management, intellectual organization, evidentiary synthesis, and comprehensive critical thinking, all of which are skills applicable to any profession.

**Budget Justification** (What resources are necessary to improve student learning?)

Students are strongly encouraged to use JSTOR, an on-line database with full-text scholarly articles, thereby improving their access to appropriate secondary sources. Such access remains important if students are to develop the necessary skills for baccalaureate work. Current budget resources appear adequate.