

Course Outcomes Guide June 2018
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Course/Program Title: World History I (HIS 101)

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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

Since Fall 2013 a rigorous ten-question assessment has been implemented each semester. The assessment includes several primary source reading selections and ten multiple choice questions that require students to evaluate and analyze both the content of the sources and the trends and themes common to several or all of the sources. Students take the assessment at the beginning of the semester and then again at the end of the semester to determine the degree to which they have mastered the desired skills. Specific questions in the assessment tool measure the application of methods used in the study of history and the application of historical knowledge learned in the course. Items included on the assessment were designed to pose significant challenges to even those students who became adept at interpreting historical documents. This is the fifth year in which this assessment has been implemented, and the second year since a few revisions were made (item order, and editing to clarify a couple of items related to Outcome 1), and results have remained consistent (see below).

Validation

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. Moreover, the results from the new assessment tool seem to yield data that is consistent with the data that has survived from 2009-2011. External validation derives from the alignment of the assessment tools with standards set by the American Historical Association in the 2016 Tuning core document, "History Discipline Core" (<https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/tuning-the-history-discipline/2016-history-discipline-core>).

Results

Assessment scores for Fall 2017 reflected improvement over the course of the semester comparable to that achieved in other years. In Spring 2018, post-test scores fell quite a bit short of the desired goal. Data for each section still demonstrates that individual students do continue to improve significantly between the pre-and post-tests, but many did not improve enough to achieve the passing score of 6. This semester may prove to present an outlier, and since numbers

in Fall were consistent with previous years, the data for Spring 2018 will not at this time affect plans for the next year.

The following table provides a semester by semester comparison of aggregate data. The goal, given the rigor of this tool, is for 70% of students to receive a passing score or better):

Semester/Year	Percentage of students scoring 6 or better on Pre-test	Percentage of students scoring 6 or better on Post-test
SP18 (For this semester some data was omitted because of errors.)	38	50
FA17	36	65
SP17	50	70
FA16	37	66
(Assessment tool revised Summer, 2016.)		
SP16	29	66
FA15	26	56
SP15	15	52
FA14 (For this semester some data was omitted because of errors.)	36	65
SP14	21	46
FA13	16	46

Follow-up

- 1) The earlier version of this assessment tool seemed overly rigorous, particularly for a pre-test, and it does not yet seem clear that the revisions made were sufficient. Further revisions will be piloted in one section only in the Spring of 2019 at the latest.
- 2) The number of students in online courses who do not complete the pre- or post- tests has been reduced by attaching the assessment to the orientation at the beginning and the final exam at the end.

Budget Justification

The volume of reading material assigned in a World History course—especially focusing on the ancient period, which includes primary sources with quite antiquated writing styles—poses a problem for both ESL students and for students with poor reading comprehension. Some other Maryland Community Colleges (Frederick and Prince George's) offer pre- or co-requisite reading comprehension or co-instruction in college-level reading. At HCC perhaps targeted assistance in reading comprehension provided to specific students via the Student Learning Center could provide an alternative solution, but this would require that the LSC possesses the resources to provide access to tutors or faculty proficient in teaching remedial reading.