

Course Outcomes Guide

Course/Program Title: HIS 202 – United States History II

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

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate and utilize primary and secondary source material to write a research paper that makes a clear historical argument.
2. Recognize important trends and themes in United States history and demonstrate the connection between historical foundations and current events.
3. Recognize the ways in which the broadening of American democratic traditions reflects citizens' tolerance of diversity.

Assessment (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome? Please attach a copy of your assessment electronically.)

Comprised of several primary source reading selections and ten multiple choice questions, the assessment requires students to evaluate and analyze the sources' content and identify trends and themes common to several or all of the passages. Students are administered the assessment at the beginning and end of the semester to determine the degree to which they have achieved the desired outcomes. At least 70% of students should be able to achieve a minimum score of seven on the assessment after completing the course.

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

Internal validation includes analysis of the data collected by faculty with terminal degrees in the discipline. The results from the assessment tool typically yields data that are generally 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?)

Assessment data for the 2017-2018 academic year is summarized below:

	<u>Pre-Test</u>	<u>Post-Test</u>
<u>Fall 2017</u>		
Average score (1 section/10 students)	6.47	5.80
% of students achieving a score of 7+	70%	30.0%
<u>Spring 2018</u>		
Average score (1 section/8 students)	6.79	8.33
% of students achieving a score of 7+	75%	87.5%

Current data was not consistent with the historical trend of the last several years. In part, this reveals the degree to which a smaller sample size can sometimes skew results. The divergent

number of history majors in each class may have influenced the data, also. History majors comprised only ten percent of the fall class but accounted for fifty-five percent of the spring enrollment. Furthermore, students in the fall section were remarkably disengaged intellectually from the material while the reverse was true for the spring section. A majority of students in both semesters missed questions that reflected their tenuous grasp of the relevant historical facts, particularly in FA17 where ninety percent of the students missed a question that merely required a careful reading and thoughtful consideration of the chronology. In another instance, ninety percent of students in the fall missed the question that required them to draw an inferred conclusion while eighty-nine percent in the spring demonstrated mastery of the same skill.

Pedagogical scaffolding designed to improve the quality of students' final research project seeks to strengthen their preparation for the post-test assessment even though the anomalous FA17 data suggests otherwise. The number of non-history majors taking the course varies from semester to semester which also affects the aggregate mean score. Students who have not followed the major course sequence or who have not previously completed a college-level history course often perform at a lower level on the standardized assessments. The scaffolding of research project assignments, however, continues to mitigate this problem but pedagogical adjustments cannot overcome all student deficiencies.

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

The data are reviewed annually to determine the effectiveness of current course assignments. Long-term dramatic decreases in aggregate scores will be analyzed to determine if any significant changes in course design are necessary. FA17 results are a statistical outlier and do not warrant changes to the course at this time.

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

Current resources appear adequate.