

History (B.A.) Program Assessment Plan

History and Geography Department
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Introduction

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for collecting data on student learning in the History B.A program. The History faculty then uses this data to inform decision making about the program. As with all assessment, the ultimate goal is to develop and improve the program's offerings and effectiveness.

Since the goal of assessment is to assist faculty, an additional consideration in developing this plan was to make the process of collecting assessment data as seamless as possible. Previous attempts at program assessment placed undue burdens on faculty members and as a result were not terribly successful.

To that end, the plan is intended to dovetail with university-wide student learning outcomes and assessment, especially for the General Education program. The History faculty formulated the program's student learning outcomes to align with the first three university-wide student learning outcomes. The plan is also focused on collecting data that can be used for both History and General Education program assessment.

Program Structure

The History B.A. program has three concentrations:

- American and World
- Social Studies Secondary Education
- Public History

Although the occupational endpoint for each concentration is different, the core historical competencies are the same. Therefore the student learning outcomes and assessment plan apply to each of the three concentrations.

The nature of the program's course offerings is also relevant for the assessment plan. Our courses fall into three categories: introductory courses that are offered every semester, upper-level courses offered in rotation by each faculty member in their specialist subject areas, and the two seminars required of all majors that are offered every semester. The introductory courses are also part of the General Education program. Since each individual upper-level course might only be offered once every two to three years, assessing them on a regular basis would be onerous. Therefore, the plan focuses on collecting data from the introductory and seminar courses.

Student Learning Outcomes

Relevant ESU General Education Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- I. Demonstrate an understanding of their role as citizens of a diverse, global society.
- II. Utilize critical thinking skills.
- III. Communicate orally, in writing, and through other formats.
 - IX a and b. Deploy advanced writing competencies (Writing Level 2 and 3).

History B.A. Program Student Learning Outcomes

An ESU History graduate will...

1) Possess a breadth of historical knowledge.

- Engage in learning about multiple time periods. These might include ancient, medieval, early modern, modern, twentieth century, etc.
- Engage in learning about the history of different nations or regions. These might include the United States, Europe, Asia, Latin America, etc.
- Gain familiarity with multiple historical approaches or methodologies. These might include political, economic, social, cultural, military, etc.
- Be able to identify and use appropriate sources to continue to gain historical knowledge.

2) Think historically.

- Ask historical questions and develop appropriate research strategies to answer them.
- Adopt a skeptical attitude towards arguments, demanding evidence and being able to evaluate historical sources.
- Think in terms of change over time and contextualize the past on its own terms.
- Understand and appreciate, without necessarily sharing, diverse cultural and ideological frames.

3) Communicate to a contemporary audience.

- Communicate, especially in writing, in a clear, organized, and effective manner.
- Apply historical insight to contemporary issues and provide motivation for historical inquiry suitable to a lay audience.
- Engage civilly with people of diverse viewpoints.
- Apply critical thinking, structured writing, and problem-solving skills to all aspects of life.

Plan for the Collection of Assessment Data

Overview

The plan takes advantage of the alignment between the university General Education and History SLOs to collect data on a rotating basis that can be used in the assessment of both programs. The two-year (four semester) rotation ensures that each outcome is assessed for each course while minimizing the amount of reporting required from faculty members teaching any given course.

Alignment of University and History SLOs

History 1: Possess a breadth of historical knowledge

→ University I: Global Citizenship

History 2: Think historically

→ University II: Critical Thinking

History 3: Communicate to a contemporary audience

→ University III and IX: Writing

Course Mapping

There are eight history courses that are part of the GE program, which map onto the program and university-wide SLOs:

- HIST 111, 113, 115, 141, 143, and 272 map to SLOs 1 and 2
- HIST 390 is a IXa: Writing Level 2 course, which maps to SLO 3
- HIST 495 is a IXb: Writing Level 3 course, which maps to SLO 3
 - HIST 495 is also GE certified under University IV: Information Literacy

Assessment Rotation

For each outcome, the courses that map to that outcome will be assessed one or more times in a cycle of two years or four semesters. The Assessment Coordinator will select one or more sections and ask the instructor to submit data from the assessment tool(s) described in the GE certification document.

	SLO 1 and 2 Rotation	SLO 3/IX Rotation
Semester 1	111	390
Semester 2	113	495 (include SLO IV)
Semester 3	141	495 (include SLO IV)
Semester 4	143 and 272	390

The first “Semester 1” was Spring 2020.