

Assessment Report for Undergraduate Education 2012

The following assessment report is divided into four parts. The first consists of assessment reports by the instructors of History 2302, The Historians' Craft: Methodology. The second section assesses the work of students taking HIST 4484 Senior Seminar. The third section collects results from the four core survey assessments. The final section offers recommendations.

Part I: Methodology

Summer 2012

The primary source analysis papers were assessed as follows::

1 exemplary (8%)
4 proficient (33%)
5 needs improvement (42%)
2 lack of understanding (17%)

Improving these results would require improvements in my methods course such as: setting aside additional instructional time early in the semester to assist non-history majors understand the basics of historical research and analysis by providing a shorter exercise that seeks the same level of analysis AND incorporating additional library resources training by the instructor to help students familiarize themselves with extant historical databases and bound materials. Overall, a majority of students failed to demonstrate proficiency in research methods and analytical writing.

Fall 2012

Two sections of Methodology were taught during the fall semester of 2012. Thirty students completed the two assessments required in the course.

Assessment Exam

I administered the mandatory assessment exam for Methodology during the first week of the semester. Student responses to each question are analyzed below.

1. Describe in a paragraph essay what work you have had to date in the field of history (give specific courses), and why you decided to major in history.

Most students (63%) had taken only survey courses coming into Methodology. This is the best time for a History major to take the course since they will learn the skills of history before launching into upper-division courses. 23% of students (7) had taken one upper division class prior to Methodology, and the remaining students (4) had taken at least two upper-division History courses. This means that 86% of students are taking Methodology when they should – before they proceed too far into their major.

There are several reasons why students decided to major in history. The main reason is interest and passion in the subject, and a majority indicated that history resonated with them in a personal way. Others indicated that History would offer them career opportunities in teaching and Public History. One student found History interesting but wasn't sure what could be done with the degree. Although we later discussed what careers were related to history, it wouldn't be a bad idea to spend a class outlining career paths in history.

2. *Looking back at your history course work to date, what have you learned about the nature of historical study? What themes or topics have been most interest to you, and why? Try and support your general observations with specific illustrations drawn from specific courses.*

Students again offered various perspectives about the nature of historical study. The most popular reason was the unique perspective that history offers. Students recognized that history offered various interpretations of the past, and an integral part of historical study was learning how to gauge these varying viewpoints. According to one student, "I have learned that history is about perspective and unless you have all the accounts, then there will never be a 'true' history book." Another student emphasized the context of history and how historical accounts are often shaped by the time they are written: "When history is told, it can be interpreted in many different ways. Time is a big factor of how history is told."

In general, I thought that this section of the assessment exam was most insightful and most promising, because it indicates that our students have already been thinking about the significance of history before taking Methodology. Since most students taking the assessment exam had experience with only survey courses, it suggests that history faculty do an effective job of communicating aspects of historical study when teaching survey courses. Two faculty members were singled out for their role in discussing the nature of history in their upper-division courses: "Dr. de Nie's classes on Britain and Dr. Vasconcellos' class on the history of the Caribbean were two of the upper level history courses that taught me more on the nature of historical study . . . I learned how to let go of bias and instead focus on the historical events themselves."

The range of topics of interest to students was overwhelmingly diverse. Although a majority emphasized an interest in U.S. history, a number of students indicated an interest in non-American areas including Europe, Asia, and the Atlantic World. They also expressed interest in an array of themes that included military history, politics, biography, race and ethnicity, and even philosophy. In looking over course offerings for the department, I think the department does an effective job of offering classes that meet the demands and expectations of our students.

3. *Each of the following is a term that history students should know. Define each of them as specifically as possible.*

historiography: At best, students understood that historiography had something to do with "the study of history." Few of them, however, could offer any details beyond this. The vast majority of students (70%) taking this assessment exam had no clue what historiography meant, so it is important for us to continue emphasizing the significance of this term and its importance to the study of history.

plagiarism: Most students (73%) successfully defined plagiarism on a basic level. This basic understanding included taking ideas and information from a source and not attributing credit to the author. Most failed to go beyond a basic understanding of the term, and this reinforces the need to discuss the various dimensions of plagiarism and cheating in Methodology.

bias: Bias proved a bit more difficult for students to define. Most understood that bias meant being subjective, but few went beyond that, failing to indicate why subjectivity is significant and how it impacts historical study. The following answer is suggestive of most responses: "Bias is the influence your background has on the way you speak, think, behave, and believe." Their answers reflect a need to make sure the issue of bias is covered in some depth in Methodology.

4. Write a brief essay on a historical question of your choosing. Some examples of historical questions are: Why were the American colonists successful in their war of independence from Great Britain? How did the Qing conquest of 1644 change Chinese administration? What was the greatest contribution to Arabic culture made by Mohammed? Do not write on one of those questions; come up with one on your own and answer it. Once again, try and be as specific as possible in your essay.

Students generally did well in posing a historical question. One student asked “What role did the French and Germans play in the American Revolution?” The answer emphasized specific German contributions to the British war effort and outlined examples of how the French supported Washington and the American cause. Another student queried, “Why was the Industrial Revolution such a major turning point in American history?” The answer included a discussion of new technology, demographic changes, and the impact on workers.

Several students posed ineffective questions or subpar answers. One student examined “Why Napoleon failed” and proceeded to provide a fragmented answer that focused on Napoleon’s “disease.” According to the student, “Napoleon had a disease . . . he was a bad loser, if Napoleon lost something, a battle, he would go on to something else to try and conquer.” I used these examples (of effective and ineffective questions and answers) during a class discussion where we explored historical questions and arguments in greater depth. I think this part of the assessment exam is very helpful because it provides case studies that can be used in class (without the names of students) to help clarify what we can (or can’t) do as historians.

Primary Source Analysis Papers

Students submitted two primary source papers during the semester. The first is the mandated primary source assignment for assessment. This included a 2-3 page analysis of a primary document that I assigned by John Adams entitled *Thoughts on Government*. These papers were assessed according to the following rubric (which includes the averages for the each question):

1.	Does the paper analyze the primary source critically?	
	Exemplary (90-100 percent)	37 percent
	Proficient (70-89 percent)	37 percent
	Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	27 percent
	Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent
2.	Does the paper cite its sources correctly?	
	Exemplary (90-100 percent)	63 percent
	Proficient (70-89 percent)	17 percent
	Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	20 percent
	Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent
3.	Is the paper written clearly and persuasively?	
	Exemplary (90-100 percent)	30 percent
	Proficient (70-89 percent)	33 percent
	Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	37 percent
	Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent
4.	Does the paper construct a persuasive historical argument based on evidence from the source?	
	Exemplary (90-100 percent)	20 percent

Proficient (70-89 percent)	33 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	47 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

5. Does the paper demonstrate an ability to think historically?

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	33 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	37 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	30 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Students generally analyzed *Thoughts on Government* in adequate depth. Most were able to pull out key points throughout the reading and address a few of the main themes of the document. Students also did well on citing the document. We spent time in class going over specific details on how to properly cite the document, and it helped that we did this the class period before the assignment was due (hopefully it remained fresh on their minds). Their ability to think historically and construct a persuasive historical argument needed some improvement, as did their writing. While students could identify key points, they had trouble connecting these points together in a coherent whole. Only a few could effectively articulate the main thesis that Adams was trying to argue, and most offered minimal reflection on the historical significance of the document. Part of the reason for these problems could be attributed to the fact that this was the first major assignment for the class and students had limited experience with primary sources and writing exercises at that point. Most struggled to articulate their thoughts effectively.

Later in the semester students had another chance to complete an assignment that utilized primary sources. This longer assignment (seven pages) required them to write a paper based entirely on primary sources. Students had to argue a thesis and support it with primary sources on the topic. This assignment allowed the class to incorporate methods and skills that they learned during the course of the semester, and it offered me an opportunity to compare their grades for both primary source assignments. The overall class average for the longer research paper was almost a half a grade higher than the earlier primary source paper which suggests that they were able to apply what they learned and improve in their ability to analyze and construct persuasive arguments.

I will continue to assign both types of primary source papers in my class. The earlier assignment offers me a benchmark to compare the results of the later research paper, and both assignments should help prepare students in their writing and analysis of primary sources for upper-division courses.

PART II: Senior Seminar

Spring 2012

All 23 Senior Seminar papers from the spring 2012 semester were assessed for all of the departmental learning outcomes. The results appear below:

The papers from this semester, with one exception, were strongest in terms of the quality of the questions being asked, and in the adherence to standards of academic honesty. There was one paper that raised questions of plagiarism beyond just being sloppy in terms of the references used; this student also sought to incorporate entire sections of a paper written for a previous class. Six of the papers failed to adequately state a thesis, whereas six papers offered clearly stated theses. The other papers were adequate. One paper was considered outstanding by both myself and the second

reader in both the quality of research and the clarity of the writing and organization. One paper showed remarkable originality in the question posed and the diligent research undertaken, but the clarity of the final written paper was astonishingly poor. Several of the papers asked substantive questions, but failed to follow through in the research to answer their particular question adequately. Overall, I was disappointed in the final product of this particular class, because of the fact that there were a number of strong students who in my view did not work to the best of their ability on the Senior Seminar paper. I expected more from several students, and felt that they simply did not put the time or focus into the research and writing for this particular paper. At least half of the papers reflected minimal efforts at research, at seeking out substantive primary sources, and at in-depth analysis of the sources they did find. Six of the papers were very thoroughly researched and showed an ability to analyze primary sources at a sophisticated level; yet, on the whole though, most of the papers were not as thoroughly researched as they should have been. I believe that I did see an improvement overall in the aggregate handling of historiography. Some students still perform poorly in writing this section, and continue to misunderstand the need to put their particular question into an historiographical context. But the growing exposure of our undergraduates to questions of historiography is definitely contributing to students in the Senior Seminar having a clearer understanding coming in to the class about the meaning of historiography. Several of the papers showed sophistication in constructing the historiographical section, and these students had in fact taken one of the offered seminars in historiography.

As in the past, the weakest area was in the quality of the writing and in the ability to construct an historical argument based upon concrete evidence. Below are qualitative comments regarding our learning outcomes based upon the papers written in both semesters.

Ability to cite sources properly

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	17 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	57 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	22 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	4 percent

All papers in the course except for one adhered to the principles of academic honesty. But students continue to struggle with proper footnote and endnote citation style. Students continue to struggle with citing internet sources properly, and with punctuating properly book and film titles. Students still seem oblivious to the rules involving sources cited more than once. Students still profess ignorance of the different formatting for footnote and bibliographic notations.

Ability to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a particular historical question

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	17 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	57 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	26 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Most of the papers demonstrated a strong understanding of the context for their historical question; they seem to learn a lot about their topics through their research, which comes through more in the oral presentation than perhaps in the paper. But I still did not see adequate fact-based contextualization of their topics. Many of the students were very general in their discussion of historical events or personages relative to their question. Most were limited in their discussion of

the broader historical context for their questions. For the most part, they did not seek to connect their more limited topics with larger related historical issues and questions.

Ability to recognize and to pose significant historical questions

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	26 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	48 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	26 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

On balance the students were very strong in this semester. I was impressed with a number of the questions, and was only disappointed in the efforts made to answer them. Students still tend to be too general with their questions and it takes a lot of working with them to help them narrow the question down to a topic that can be addressed in a single semester. Or, they tend to want to ask a question that is really not very original, though in their minds, it is new to them, and a topic that is of interest to them. I found it challenging with several students to get them to understand that if they chose to pursue a more basic question frequently treated in historical literature, then they need to seek out new sources, or take a fresh angle.

Ability to find useful primary and secondary sources

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	26 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	48 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	22 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	4 percent

This semester I felt that on the whole, the students were better than in recent semesters about consulting with professors and gathering secondary sources, particularly more recently published scholarly literature. Students still underuse scholarly articles, though. Students were not consistent in following up initial meetings with professors. I think that students on the whole did make an effort to find primary sources; at least half to even two-thirds perhaps, had at least two or three primary sources, which though minimal was perhaps better as an average than past classes. I worked closely this semester with the library and scheduled several hands-on sessions with an information specialist and history liaison; she came and guided students through the process of finding primary and secondary sources in the library catalogues and data bases. I think that information literacy continues to improve, and some of the students definitely took advantage of the assistance being offered them. But as in the past, I was still disappointed in the overall utilization of library resources, primary source internet sites and databases. Students continue to try to do as much as they can of the paper based on secondary sources, and do not bring in more than a minimal number of primary sources. The finished products amounted to average, but not excellent, performance in this area. Some students disregarded instruction to engage with particular sources. They identify the sources, list them in the bibliography, but do not analyze them critically as evidence for substantiating an argument.

Ability to analyze sources critically

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	26 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	48 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	22 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	4 percent

Students continue to show weakness in their ability to critically analyze sources. On the whole, the papers were weaker than I would like to see in the students' ability to use primary sources as the basis for their analysis of key points. They did not show skill in presenting primary sources as an evidentiary base for their arguments, but rather seemed to be trying simply to get them into the paper because it is a requirement. Several students had collected excellent examples of primary sources, but were weak in fleshing out all of the analytical insights that were there. Students are reluctant to engage with the meaning of a source beyond just summarizing it. They use sources without questioning their accuracy, nor do they seek to engage with sources that may contradict their argument. I try to get them to understand that for every source they are analyzing in the paper, they need to assess the viability and credibility of the material for answering their question. They need to consider the limitations of the source and provide evidence to corroborate their use of it. But few of the papers attempted to do this.

Ability to write and to speak clearly

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	26 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	48 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	22 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	4 percent

The writing of the papers continues to be the greatest weakness of the students. The papers' writing ranged in quality from excellent to awful. I continue to be appalled to see how many grammatical errors there were in the final drafts. Some of the papers did not articulate points clearly or were not cohesive in the construction of the argument. Students tended to over generalize and use the passive rather than the active voice. I found the students in this class to be more articulate in their oral presentations than in their written papers. Even some of the stronger students who knew how to organize their papers well still made grammatical and syntactical errors.

I found this class of students to be very strong in their oral presentations, at least in terms of their clarity, organization, and ease with public speaking. Yet, I would not say that I had an outstanding oral presentation this semester. But at least six of the students put together strong final oral presentations. I did not have as many students this semester going under the prescribed time limits; in fact, I had the opposite with several having to be told to finish. I was particularly impressed with the quality of the primary source analysis presentations. I felt that the students did a better job this semester identifying solid primary sources and explaining how the source would be used in the paper. There were several poor presentations that were particularly poor, however, in the quality of the primary source chosen and the analysis provided.

Ability to construct a persuasive historical argument based on evidence

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	17 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	57 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	22 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	4 percent

I would say that most of the students this semester attempted to construct a thesis in the form of an answer to their research question, and most then tried to substantiate it, though not always with primary sources. But, students continue to confuse the purpose of the paper with the argument.

Several papers did not clearly articulate or pursue a thesis, though they stated a purpose. There were many cases in which the paper was not as tightly focused as it could have been. At least six of the students did not seem to have tried very hard to find persuasive evidence to back and illustrate points. Several lost track of their argument in the course of the paper. Many papers were weak in the presentation and analysis of evidence for the argument. Several of the papers failed to provide a conclusion, even if they had provided solid analysis of sources.

Ability to think historically

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	26 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	48 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	26 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

On balance the papers were reasonably good and demonstrated a strong ability to think historically without moralizing or engaging in anachronistic thinking. All of the papers attempted to place their arguments in historiographical context, and I would say that a higher percentage of papers did this to an adequate level. I have seen progress in student understanding of what historiography is, and some have become quite skilled in it. But overall students still struggle with the need to examine what other historians have written about their topic, and they resist having to categorize the literature. Some still used the historiography section to summarize the secondary literature they then used in the paper. As in past semesters, the discussions of historiography were often overly general and not focused on the precise question at hand.

Senior Seminar: The Reflective Essay

Students in the course were required to write a reflective essay of 2-3 pages in length addressing the following question: What have you learned during your time as a student at West Georgia? The papers were graded and counted for 5 percent of the course grade. I did not coach the students on what to write about. I explained that it was meant to be broad so that students would reflect for themselves on what they regarded as the most important things they had learned.

Many emphasized the importance of learning to think critically and to verify the sources of information; several praised their history courses for helping them to probe more deeply into issues and into their readings, and to ask questions. They noted as well that they believed themselves to have learned how to construct an argument and to gather evidence that could substantiate their points.

As in past semesters, I would say that overall the students demonstrate strong satisfaction with their experience as history majors. This is aptly demonstrated in the fact that several students, at least four to my knowledge, from this class entered our graduate program upon completing their undergraduate degree in history. Most comment favorably on the relationships they have developed with professors, and they express consistent appreciation for the willingness of history faculty to work with students and to go out of their way to help students. Students praise our faculty for their knowledge, their accomplishments, their skills as teachers, but they also comment favorably on how approachable and available our professors make themselves. The students expressed appreciation for professors who were willing to work with them individually and who were understanding and flexible in their procedures. I think that the areas that came under criticism most frequently were areas of history not being covered, particularly African-American history, a gap that happily we have now filled with the hire of Dr. Rivers. Several students

complained about the number and variety of upper-level courses being offered, stating that they did not feel we are offering enough upper-level courses each semester. Several of the students did not take this assignment as seriously as I had hoped, and one student in the end failed to turn it in. In general, as in past semesters, the writing was clearer and freer of errors than in the research papers. Students appear very comfortable when they are writing more personally and in their own voice.

Fall 2012

All nineteen Senior Seminar papers from the fall 2012 semester were assessed for all of the departmental learning outcomes. The results appear below:

Ability to cite sources properly

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	26 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	37 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	37 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

There was no plagiarism among the Senior Seminar papers. A disappointingly large number of students did not master the mechanics of citation. I believe that some students see no reason to master this skill. I propose devoting more attention to this issue in Methodology.

Planned improvement: Faculty will discuss means to improve students' ability to cite sources properly.

Ability to demonstrate general knowledge of U.S. and World history and in-depth knowledge of a particular historical question

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	16 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	63 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	21 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: Results are satisfactory.

Ability to recognize and to pose significant historical questions

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	63 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	32 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	5 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

This skill had the highest percentage of exemplary performances. Student success in this area owed in substantial measure to the fact that we worked on their questions extensively, and the students continually revisited and refined their questions over time. I suspect that if students received the same level of feedback on other aspects of their work and continued to refine other aspects of their work through continual revision that other features could improve as well.

Planned improvement: Results are satisfactory.

Ability to find useful primary and secondary sources

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	26 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	42 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	32 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: Faculty will discuss ways of strengthening students' research skills.

Ability to analyze sources critically

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	5 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	68 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	21 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	5 percent

This was the one skill where one student performed at an unacceptable level. The student still passed the course.

Planned improvement: Faculty will discuss ways to improve students' analysis of sources.

Ability to write and to speak clearly

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	0 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	74 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	26 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

This was the only skill on which no student showed exemplary performance.

Planned improvement: Faculty will discuss ways to improve student writing.

Ability to construct a persuasive historical argument based on evidence

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	5 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	68 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	26 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: Results are satisfactory.

Ability to think historically

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	11 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	63 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	26 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: Results are satisfactory.

Senior Seminar: The Reflective Essay

Students in the course were required to write a three-page reflective essay addressing the following question: What have you learned during your time as a student at West Georgia? The papers were graded and counted for 5 percent of the course grade. I did not coach the students on what to write about. I explained that the question was meant to be broad so that students would reflect for themselves on what they regarded as the most important things they had learned. Two students singled out Drs. Bohannon and MacKinnon for praise as excellent teachers in their essays. Students emphasized their learning of skills such as writing and time management rather than of content knowledge of history.

Senior Seminar: Questionnaire

In fall 2012 for the first time students answered a questionnaire on their experience at UWG. The questionnaire asked students to evaluate the degree to which their history education had taught them each of the learning outcomes. The students' evaluations appear below:

My history education at UWG has provided me with a general knowledge of U.S. and World history and in-depth knowledge of a particular historical question

Strongly agree	50 percent
Agree	50 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

My history education at UWG has taught me how to recognize and to pose significant historical questions

Strongly agree	58 percent
Agree	42 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

My history education at UWG has taught me how to find useful primary and secondary sources

Strongly agree	75 percent
Agree	25 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

My history education at UWG has taught me how to analyze sources critically

Strongly agree	58 percent
Agree	42 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

My history education at UWG has taught me how to write and to speak clearly

Strongly agree	50 percent
Agree	50 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

My history education at UWG has taught me how to construct a persuasive historical argument based on evidence

Strongly agree	58 percent
Agree	42 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

My history education at UWG has taught me how to think historically

Strongly agree	92 percent
Agree	8 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

Our students thus generally believe that we have taught them the skills that we seek to teach them. No student believed we failed to teach the skills we aim to teach.

When asked to identify weaknesses in the program, two students identified the foreign language requirement. One wrote that it “is not fair and it is a complete waste of time.” One student wrote that there were “not enough research papers.” Another student would like to have “more advice on what to do once we have our degree.”

The results on the following point were encouraging.
History professors at UWG care about their students.

Strongly agree	75 percent
Agree	25 percent
Disagree	0 percent
Strongly disagree	0 percent

Part III: Core Courses

A. HIST 1111

Spring 2012	
Exemplary (90-100 percent)	23 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	58 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	16 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: Results will be shared with other instructors as part of on-going discussions of teach[ing] and learning approaches. Instruction will increase focus on analytical and writing skills.

Fall 2012

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	37.5 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	33.93 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	21.43 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	7.14 percent

Planned improvement: Results will be shared with other instructors as part of on-going discussions of teach[ing] and learning approaches. Instruction will increase focus on analytical and writing skills.

B. HIST 1112

Spring 2012

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	13 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	20 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	35 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	32 percent

Planned improvement: Instruction will focus more carefully on the material over which students will be assessed.

Fall 2012

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	91 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	0 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	9 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: Results are satisfactory.

(Note: This was an honors section.)

C. HIST 2111

Spring 2012

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	33 percent
Proficient (80-89 percent)	53 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (70-79 percent)	7 percent
Unacceptable (below 69 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: results satisfactory

(Note: This was an honors course.)

Fall 2012

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	29 percent
Proficient (80-89 percent)	25 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (70-79 percent)	23 percent
Unacceptable (below 69 percent)	23 percent

Planned improvement: This is the second year that we have assessed HIS 2111. After last year's numbers, we decided to incorporate the primary source material more into class lectures in an effort to enhance our students' analytical skills before giving the assessment quiz. This improved numbers somewhat, but like last year, we note that students continue to grasp the basics of each narrative that they read. Yet, analysis of the overall themes and meanings behind those readings prove to be a bit more difficult despite the instructors' attempt at discussing the readings before the quizzes take place. At this time there is no plan to re-evaluate the instruments used for assessment, but the instructors are continuing to discuss and evaluate ways to better improve the students' analytical skills.

D. HIST 2112

Spring 2012

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	8 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	47 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	29 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	16 percent

Planned improvement: none listed

Fall 2012

Exemplary (90-100 percent)	18 percent
Proficient (70-89 percent)	50 percent
Developing/ Does Not Meet Expectations (60-69 percent)	31 percent
Unacceptable (below 60 percent)	0 percent

Planned improvement: Results are satisfactory.

Part IV: Recommendations

1. We should focus our assessment of the core courses carefully on the learning outcomes specified. Our assessment instruments should indicate how well the students "demonstrate the ability to understand the political, social, economic, or cultural dimensions of world and American history."
2. Instruction in Methodology should attempt to persuade students that mastering mechanics of citing sources will make their lives easier in the future and will demonstrate attention to detail to their readers. The course should require students to revise a paper until they correctly cite all sources in it. This may require multiple drafts.
3. Consider lowering the cap in Senior Seminar to twelve students as in English or sixteen as in Political Science and offering a summer course in session II.
4. Continue to encourage students to take Methodology before enrolling in upper-division history courses. The earlier they can learn the skills of history, the more time they have to apply them to upper-division courses. The department now offers two sections of Methodology each semester, along with one during the summer, so this should provide enough seats (100 per year) to meet the demands of students who are freshmen and sophomores and need to take Methodology.

5. Those who teach Methodology should discuss the merits of including a class that outlines various career paths that one can pursue with a History degree.
6. Since the term historiography proves problematic, we need to continue working with students on how to define the term and discuss its impact on historical scholarship. It will help that we are now regularly offering a class entitled Junior Seminar in Historiography, where faculty can explore the complex issues of historiography in greater depth.
7. Faculty teaching Methodology should meet annually to discuss their experiences of teaching the class and offer suggestions on how to improve Methodology. The assessment reports from the prior year should also be consulted during this annual meeting to review recommendations that have been made regarding Methodology. Changes should be implemented as needed.
8. Revise the departmental learning outcomes to separate writing and speaking into separate learning outcomes:
 - a. Our learning outcomes now include the following:
 - i. to write and to speak clearly
 - b. We should revise our writing learning outcome to track the Quality Enhancement Plan and state a separately assessable learning outcome that could be assessed through the Senior Seminar oral presentation. The learning outcomes should include the abilities:
 - i. to write in standard English
 - ii. to make an effective ten-minute oral presentation
9. Revise assessment plan as described in attachment.