

PART II: ASSESSMENT

A. Assessment Plan for Bachelor of Arts in History

1. Introduction

The History Department is committed to assessing student learning as a vital part of its expressed mission “to teach students about the past and about the discipline of history as an integral part of a complete liberal arts education.” The Department has described what it wants students to learn in the following Learning Outcomes for our undergraduate students:

Students who earn the Bachelor of Arts degree in history will be able to:

- Demonstrate content knowledge of history
- Analyze primary and secondary sources for their historical content and interpretations
- Demonstrate ability to research according to historical methods
- Demonstrate writing skills that reflect persuasive historical arguments based on evidence and proper citation

The Department’s assessment activities reflect its members’ conviction that teaching and learning, like any human activity, can be understood through sustained, rigorous reflection and interpretation of relevant evidence. In order to carry out its teaching mission as effectively as it can, the Department therefore seeks to measure student learning through the activities described below.

2. The Departmental Scale for Measuring Student Learning

In quantifying student learning for purposes of collecting and reporting assessment information, the Department will apply the following scale:

Exemplary	90-100 percent correct	4
Proficient	70-89 percent correct	3
Developing	60-69 percent correct	2
Unacceptable	below 60 percent correct	1

The percentages of students performing at each level should be reported for purposes of assessment.

The Department defines success for each learning outcome as having at least 85 percent of students demonstrating proficiency or better. That standard is consistent with the success criteria of other programs at the University of West Georgia.

For a fuller description of the four standards of performance for each of the four learning outcomes, see Appendix B.

3. Assessing Student Learning in the Methodology Course

During the first two weeks of the course, students will be required to complete a survey asking them how well they have met each of the Department's learning outcomes and soliciting suggestions for improvements. The survey appears as an appendix.

One of the assignments in the Methodology course requires students to use a primary source or sources to understand the historical past. The instructor will assess that assignment to gauge students' ability to (1) analyze primary sources for their historical content and interpretations; (2) demonstrate ability to research according to historical methods; and (3) demonstrate writing skills that reflect persuasive historical arguments based on evidence and proper citation.

4. Assessing Student Learning in the Senior Seminar Course

Students in the Senior Seminar course are required to write a research paper from 20 to 25 pages in length. The instructor will assess all Senior Seminar papers to determine the extent to which the papers reflect student achievement of the Learning Outcomes.

Students also are required to write a reflective essay describing what they have learned in their undergraduate education and evaluating what they perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Students also will be required to complete a survey asking them how well they have met each of the Department's learning outcomes and soliciting suggestions for improvements. The survey appears as an appendix.

The instructor will report the results to the Assessment Coordinator, who will provide them to the Department and record them in the university's assessment system.

5. Analyzing Assessment Data

Each year the Assessment Coordinator, in consultation with the instructors of the Methodology and Senior Seminar courses and the chairs of the Survey Assessment Committees, will prepare an assessment report to the Department that considers student learning as measured through each of the instruments described here. The report will consider how well students are meeting the desired learning outcomes. Where the evidence suggests improvements can be made, the report will make recommendations to improve student learning. Each fall semester, the

Department will meet to discuss assessment of student learning in advance of the university's deadline for reporting assessment data by November 1.

6. Reporting Assessment Data

The instructors of Methodology and Senior Seminar shall be responsible for providing assessment data using the four-point scale to the Assessment Coordinator, who shall be responsible for reporting data on program learning outcomes to the central UWG assessment system. The Assessment Coordinator shall be responsible for reporting to the central UWG assessment system the steps decided on each year at the fall assessment meeting to improve student learning as part of "Closing the Loop."

[Adopted 8/22/13]

[Approved 11/18/16] [rev. 10/20/17]

PART II: ASSESSMENT

B. Assessment Plan for Master of Arts in History

1. Learning Outcomes Sought

The M.A. in History at West Georgia has for its primary purpose the development of a more sophisticated understanding of the discipline of history for the post-baccalaureate student accepted into our master's program.

Students completing the Master of Arts Degree in History, through the completion of the thesis or non-thesis program will:

- a) demonstration the ability to undertake advanced historical research;
- b) show basic familiarity with historical literature in major and minor fields of study;
- c) demonstrate an understanding of historiography and its permutations over time;
- d) be able to identify and describe career options in the field of history;
- e) demonstrate a knowledge of the theory and ethics of public history [for Public History concentration];
- f) demonstrate knowledge of the standards and practices for at least two fields in public history [for Public History concentration]; and
- g) apply practical skills in at least two fields of public history [for Public History concentration].

[Revised 2/02]

2. Methods of Assessing Students' Achievement

- a) To assess research and writing skills, a paper is required in the historiography seminar (the one course required of all history M.A. students). (Learning outcomes a, b, c)
- b) Also in the historiography class each student must present one or more oral reports based on his or her reading and research. (Learning outcomes a, b, c)
- c) All members of the Department have been periodically invited to participate in the Historiography Seminar. (Learning outcome d)
- d) To obtain an overall assessment of the entire M.A. program in history, each student completing an M.A. has taken a written and/or oral examination, given by three professors.
- e) For those electing to write a Master's Thesis, the thesis also has been a major instrument of evaluation. Three professors have engaged in this evaluation as well.

3. How Assessment has been used to improve the effectiveness of the M.A. Program in History

Members of the History Graduate Studies Committee have participated in the ongoing evaluation of the program, along with the Department Chair, and have:

- a) Expanded participation of Department members in the Historiography Seminar.
- b) Increased the number of 6000-level offerings in History to at least one per semester (with the exception of summer semester) and have offered them at night at the request of students.
- c) Emphasized the research and writing component of the M.A. program in history, to encourage more students to write the thesis (especially if later desiring to enter a Ph.D. program).
- d) Instituted an effective and popular Public History program (1997) and Museum Studies Certificate program.

October, 1995 [rev. 2/02]

Department members are encouraged to use assessment results in revising teaching methods and course materials.

Rubric for Assessing History B.A. Learning Outcomes
(October 2017)

Learning Outcome 1: Demonstrate content knowledge of history.

- 4 (exceeds expectations):
 - States basic and more complicated historical content knowledge, including names, dates, events, and processes, with no errors.
- 3 (proficient):
 - States basic historical content knowledge, including names, dates, events, and processes, among others, with only a few errors.
- 2 (developing):
 - States some basic historical content knowledge with more than several errors.
 - Remains vague about content knowledge and does not demonstrate mastery of material.
- 1 (does not meet expectations):
 - Unable to state basic historical content knowledge.

Learning Outcome 2: Analyze primary and secondary sources for their historical content and interpretations.

- 4 (exceeds expectations):
 - Analyzes sources effectively, showing sophisticated critical thinking and empathy; has moved away from just summarizing source.
 - Connects a source's content to a broader historical context.
 - Reveals many subtexts and implications of a source's argument.
 - Combines material from multiple sources to build a more complicated analysis.
- 3 (proficient):
 - Though mostly focuses on analysis, still contains moments of summary unconnected to the analysis.
 - Makes some connections between the source and the broader historical context.
 - Reveals some subtexts and implications of a source's argument.
 - Combines material from multiple sources at a basic level.
- 2 (developing):
 - Mostly offers a summary of sources, with few moments of analysis.
 - Makes a few connections between the source and the broader historical context.
 - Reveals a few subtexts and implications of a source's argument.
 - Fails to combine material from multiple sources.

- 1 (does not meet expectations):
 - Fails to analyze sources; offers only summary.
 - Makes no connections between the source and the broader historical context.
 - Fails to reveal subtexts and implications of a source's argument.
 - Fails to combine material from multiple sources.

Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate ability to research according to historical methods.

- 4 (exceeds expectations):
 - Identifies and uses an impressive amount of appropriate primary and/or secondary sources; research reflects extensive digging and/or creativity in finding sources; e.g., unpublished sources used.
 - Identifies and uses an extensive amount of useful material within appropriate primary and/or secondary sources.
 - Shows initiative in conducting research.
- 3 (proficient):
 - Identifies and uses some appropriate primary and/or secondary sources.
 - identifies and uses some useful material within appropriate primary and/or secondary sources.
- 2 (developing):
 - Identifies and uses only a few appropriate primary and/or secondary sources.
 - Identifies and uses only a small amount of useful material within appropriate primary and/or secondary sources.
- 1 (does not meet expectations):
 - Fails to identify and use appropriate primary and/or secondary sources.
 - Fails to identify useful material within appropriate primary and/or secondary sources.

Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate writing skills that reflect persuasive historical arguments based on evidence and proper citation.

- 4 (exceeds expectations):
 - Makes a clear, specific and insightful thesis statement that makes an historical argument; argument shows particular originality or insight.
 - Sustains the argument and analysis throughout and avoids mere summarizing of material.
 - Supports argument throughout with evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources; use of evidence shows a discriminating eye and sophistication.
 - Writes in an organized and structured manner, both in terms of the paper as a whole and within each paragraph.
 - Uses Standard English in a professional manner with no grammatical errors.
 - Uses proper citation format (Chicago, aka Turabian, Style).
 - Meets requirements of academic honesty.

- 3 (proficient):
 - Has a mostly clear and insightful thesis statement that makes an historical argument.
 - Remains mostly focused on the argument and analysis, thus mostly avoiding mere summarizing of material.
 - Mostly supports arguments with evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources.
 - Mostly writes in an organized and structured manner, both in terms of the paper as a whole and within each paragraph.
 - Uses Standard English in a professional manner with a few grammatical errors.
 - Uses proper citation format (Chicago, aka Turabian, Style).
 - Meets requirements of academic honesty.

- 2 (developing):
 - Has a simplistic thesis statement that does make a fully persuasive historical argument.
 - Fails to remain focused on the argument and analysis; at times just summarizes material.
 - Fails to fully support argument with evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources.
 - Fails to maintain an organized and structured manner to the writing, both in terms of the paper as a whole and within each paragraph.
 - Fails to fully use Standard English in a professional manner and makes continual grammatical errors.
 - Fails to use proper citation format throughout (Chicago, aka Turabian, Style).
 - Meets requirements of academic honesty.

- 1 (does not meet expectations):
 - Fails to provide a clear thesis statement that makes an historical argument.
 - Fails to provide argument and analysis, rather offering a summary of material.
 - Fails to support argument with evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary material.
 - Fails to use Standard English in a professional manner and makes numerous grammatical errors.
 - Fails to use proper citation format (Chicago, aka Turabian, Style).
 - Plagiarizes.

[rev. 10/20/17]

PART II. ASSESSMENT

C. Assessment Plan for History Courses in the Core Curriculum

1. Learning Outcomes

a. HIST 1111 and HIST 1112:

Area E

Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the political, social, economic, or cultural dimensions of world history.

b. HIST 2111 and HIST 2112

Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the political, social, economic, or cultural dimensions of American history.

2. Assessing Student Learning and Making Improvements

The learning outcomes for the US survey and the World History surveys will be assessed each fall semester for each of the department's four history survey courses: History 1111 Survey of World History/Civilization I; History 1112 Survey of World History/Civilization II; History 2111 US History I; History 2112 US History II. Student learning will be assessed each fall at both the Newnan and Carrollton campuses. Each fall semester, instructors for at least one section of each survey course will administer a direct assessment instrument. Each fall semester, all sections of each core course should be assessed by means of an indirect assessment instrument devised by the Survey Assessment Committee for that course. Each spring semester each Survey Assessment Committee, composed of the tenured and tenure-eligible instructors who regularly teach that course, will meet to discuss the data from that instrument as well as measures to be taken to improve student learning in the future. Following that meeting, the chair of the Survey Assessment Committee shall report the assessment data using the four-point scale and any planned improvements to the Assessment Coordinator, who shall enter the data into the central UWG assessment system and include it in the annual assessment report. The chair of the Survey Assessment Committee shall report to the Assessment Coordinator when improvements are implemented, and the Assessment Coordinator shall enter that information into the Closing the Loop section of the central UWG assessment system.

[approved 22 August 2013]

Appendix

Indirect Assessment Questionnaire in Methodology and Senior Seminar

Please indicate a response for each the following questions according to the five-point scale indicated.

1. I have content knowledge of history.

5 Strongly Agree 4 Agree 3 Uncertain 2 Disagree 1 Strongly Disagree

2. I am able to analyze primary and secondary sources for their historical content and interpretations.

5 Strongly Agree 4 Agree 3 Uncertain 2 Disagree 1 Strongly Disagree

3. I am able to research according to historical methods.

5 Strongly Agree 4 Agree 3 Uncertain 2 Disagree 1 Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to demonstrate writing skills that reflect persuasive historical arguments based on evidence and proper citation.

5 Strongly Agree 4 Agree 3 Uncertain 2 Disagree 1 Strongly Disagree

5. History professors at UWG advise students effectively.

5 Strongly Agree 4 Agree 3 Uncertain 2 Disagree 1 Strongly Disagree

6. History professors at UWG teach effectively.

5 Strongly Agree 4 Agree 3 Uncertain 2 Disagree 1 Strongly Disagree

7. History professors at UWG care about their students.

5 Strongly Agree 4 Agree 3 Uncertain 2 Disagree 1 Strongly Disagree

8. What improvements would you recommend in the History program at UWG?

[approved 11/18/16]