

## **Outcomes Assessment (Provisional for 2005-2006)**

### **Teaching Mission Statement**

The history department is intent upon preparing our students to become informed, contributing citizens in a world of diverse cultures. Committed to William Faulkner's famous dictum that "the past is not dead, it is not even past," the department strives to convey to all our students an understanding of the significant historical actors, events, and cultural values that have shaped the world in which they live. The department realizes these goals by meeting its objectives in each of its three distinct areas of teaching responsibilities. These areas include: instructing all students through foundational survey courses; providing concentrated instruction in essential disciplinary topics and techniques for our history majors; and conducting advanced professional training for our graduate students in the department's three graduate programs. Vital to the teaching mission of any department at a doctoral/research extensive university is the discovery of new knowledge through professional research and creative activity, as well as through teaching and learning. Believing that these four activities are essentially interwoven, the history faculty recognizes the fundamental importance of pursuing a vigorous research agenda in order to maintain proficiency with the historian's craft, remain abreast of developments within our specialized fields, and bring to the classroom examples of excellence within the academic discipline.

### **1. University Foundational Courses in History**

#### **Objectives for University Foundational Courses**

1. Provide students with a basic understanding of the major themes, people, and events informing broad historical experiences such as Western Civilization (201/202), United States history (221/222), the history of science (280/281) and technology (284/285), and other areas.
2. Introduce students to the academic discipline of history.
3. Expose students to the intellectual and humanitarian values of historical thinking.
4. Develop students' critical thinking and reasoning skills.
5. Stimulate intellectual curiosity.

#### **Measurements for University Foundational Courses**

Semester Final Exams / Course Grades (objectives 1, 3, 4)

Student Evaluation Forms (objectives 2, 3, 4, 5)

Periodic Reviews of the number of students who take upper-level history courses as electives (objectives 2, 5)

### **2. B.A. Degree in History**

#### **Objectives for History Majors**

1. Display the appropriate level of cognitive knowledge of historical themes and events based upon the student's course of study.

2. Display an understanding of past cultures and social organizations, based on the course of study.
3. Develop the fundamental methodological skills of the historical craft:
  - The ability to contextualize and analyze primary source evidence.
  - Familiarity with the concepts of historical argument and interpretation, and the ability to formulate effective argumentation in written and oral forms.
  - Awareness of the basic historiography in selected research areas.
  - The ability to conduct research and to write a historical essay based upon primary and secondary source research.
4. Display a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between past events and the present.

### **Measurements for History Majors**

Successful completion of 30 credits of major course credit (a grade of C or above)

- At least 24 credits must be completed in 300 (intermediate) or 400 (advanced) level courses.

Successful completion of a research paper requirement

- Complete 2 credits of HIST 495, or, if qualified, one graduate level writing/research seminar

Graduating Senior Survey

Exit/Graduation interview with the Chair

Periodic reviews of GRE/LSAT scores

Periodic accumulation of placement data

External Reviews

### **3. Graduate Degrees in History**

Each of the three graduate programs is currently undergoing curriculum revisions. Outcome assessment for these programs will be posted once the revisions have been formally approved.

### **4. Changes since the last External Review**

- Graduate programs are being reviewed in order to remain appropriate for those seeking professional careers in history.
- Due to recent turnover in department faculty, the undergraduate curriculum will undergo a review; further changes to assessment may be made in response to changing curricular goals.