

Annual Assessment Report, 2017-18

History Department

As our updated Student Assessment Plan notes, since our most recent external review during the 2013-14 academic year, we have focused particular attention on assessing and improving the development of a core set of skills among our students. We specifically identified the development of research, critical thinking, written communication, and oral communication skills as central to our discipline. These, and the reason why we value them, are articulated in our department's learning goals (see below).

In order to assess the development of these skills, we initially arrived at a three-year plan that involved making use of a Senior Survey, Senior History Major Skills Evaluation Form, and a Curriculum Skills Map (see below). Within a year, we realized that the Senior Survey and Senior History Major Skills Evaluation Forms were not providing reliable data about students' skill development, and decided as of 2016-17 to expand the Skills Evaluation Forms to include all declared history majors and to extend our data collection in the hope that this would allow us to collect longitudinal data on skills development from the semester students declare a History Major to the semester they graduate.

The goal of this plan is to assess the extent to which our majors develop those skills we have deemed to be most important to our discipline. In order to accomplish this goal, we seek to place students' perceptions of their own skills development (as expressed in the Senior Survey), faculty's evaluation of students' skills development (Skills Evaluation Form), and the department's curriculum (Curriculum Skills Map) in conversation with each other.

Our challenge this year, as we completed the second full year of History Major Skills Evaluation Forms for all majors, was to establish a more coherent plan for using the data from these instruments to make evidence-based changes to our courses and curricular structure that would better scaffold the development of these skills. To this end, we decided to focus on one skill at a time for a three-year period, including more specific questions about what we agree are its component parts on the Skills Evaluation Forms. We will begin with the skill, "Research historical sources," in 2018-2021, which we have broken down into the following components:

- Independently locate historical sources.
- Access appropriate historical sources.
- Determine the relevance of a variety of different types of historical sources.
- Use independently located historical sources appropriately.

We intend to use the data garnered from these more specific questions to inform departmental conversations about how each skill is already being developed throughout the major curriculum and also how we might make slight changes to help scaffold these skills at the level of the assignment, course structure, and major curriculum. We will begin these conversations in Fall 2018.

Learning Goals:

The history department values the rich diversity of teaching styles within our department, and we all believe in the following core learning goals, which inform the courses we have developed individually and the pedagogical practices we bring to our respective classrooms. In achieving these goals, our majors should gain an understanding of why and how history is meaningful and attain skills and understanding they can utilize in their lives after college. Hendrix history majors will:

1. Develop intellectual depth and broad empirical knowledge of diverse regions, time periods, and cultures.
2. Learn a variety of approaches to the practice of historical analysis.
3. Develop a set of skills that are central to the craft of history, including the ability to:
 - a. Research relevant historical sources.
 - b. Critically analyze primary and secondary sources.
 - c. Express ideas orally in the presence of others.
 - d. Create written arguments based upon the presentation of evidence and analysis.

Assessment Tools:

In order to assess the extent to which our department is achieving those goals, we employ a variety of direct and indirect assessment tools. These include:

- Appraising capstone projects and conference presentations for all seniors
- Completing skills evaluation forms for all majors enrolled in courses in the department
- Maintaining a curriculum skills map
- Assigning grades for class assignments and courses
- Administering an annual senior survey
- Collecting data about students (*e.g.*, internships, study abroad, graduate school, *etc.*)
- Exchanging and discussing course assignments
- Hosting periodic departmental reviews

Appendix A
Senior History Major Survey (Portion)
History Department

Part II, Section 6. Skills: My experience in history courses contributed toward the development of the following kinds of skills:

Specific Skills	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Research relevant historical sources						
Critically analyze primary and secondary sources						
Express ideas orally in the presence of others						
Create written arguments based upon the presentation of evidence and analysis						

Appendix B
History Major Skills Evaluation Form (2018-2021)
History Department

Student's Name: _____

Academic Year: _____

Course Number: _____

Semester (Fall or Spring): _____

For each skill listed below, please mark the corresponding box that best characterizes your perception of this student's demonstration of that specific skill in this particular course. 10 indicates that you "strongly agree"; 1 indicates that you "strongly disagree."

Specific Skills	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
This student was able to research relevant historical sources.											
Comments:											
*Research Skill #1: This student was able to independently locate historical sources.											
Comments:											
*Research Skill #2: This student was able to access appropriate historical sources.											
Comments:											
*Research Skill #3: This student was able to determine the relevance of a variety of different types of historical sources.											
Comments:											
*Research Skill #4: This student was able to use independently located historical sources appropriately.											
Comments:											

This student was able to critically analyze primary and secondary sources.	
Comments:	
This student was able to Express ideas orally in the presence of others.	
Comments:	
This student was able to create written arguments based upon the presentation of evidence and analysis.	
Comments:	

Appendix C
Curriculum Skills Map
History Department

For each of your courses listed below, please identify the emphasis that course places on each corresponding skill as either high, medium, or low.

HIST Code	Title	Research relevant historical sources.	Critically analyze primary and secondary sources	Express ideas orally in the presence of others	Create written arguments based upon the presentation of evidence and analysis
110	North America to 1865				
111	U.S. History since 1865				
130	Colonial African History				
135	U.S. History: Uses & Abuses				
140	Leisure, Work, & Consumption in U.S.				
150	Great Wars, Depression, & Gatsby				
151	The Era of the American Revolution				
160	East Asia to 1600				
169	Modern Europe, 1789-1945				
190	History & Film				
212	American Environmental History				
214	Poverty & Welfare in America				
217	The American West				
218	The Gilded Age & Progressive Era				
221	England to 1688				
224	German History & the Jewish Question				
225	Medieval Europe				
226	Renaissance & Reformation Europe				
227	Medicine & Disease in Pre-Modern Eur				
228	The Medieval Islamic World				
230	Native North America				
243	The Modern Middle East				
244	Modern China				
246	Modern Japan				
250	History of Southern Africa				
251	History of Central Africa				
256	The American Century, 1945-Present				
270	Arkansas History				
280	Contemporary Africa				
281	Aid & Development in Africa				
285	20 th -century East Asian-Am Relations				
290	African American History to 1865				
291	Japan's Pacific War, 1932-1945				
292	The Two Koreas				
293	Korea: The Forgotten War				
294	Topics in Classical History				
295	African American History since 1865				

300	Historiography				
301	Greek Civilization				
302	Roman Civilization				
306	Crime & Punishment in East Asia				
307	Gender & Society in East Asia				
308	Ecology in Native American History				
310	The Iraq War				
317	Crusades & Contact				
318	Magic & Witchcraft in Europe				
325	Africa & the Americas				
330	Culture & Colonialism				
334	Comparative Genocides				
336	From Reason to Revolution				
338	Crime & Punishment in Medieval Eur				
339	Epidemics and Society				
341	The Arab-Israeli Conflict				
342	Revival, Revolt, & Nation-Making				
345	Issues in Archives & Public History				
353	American Civil War & Reconstruction				
360	Vietnam & the 1960s				
420	Topics in American History				
425	Topics in European History				
430	Topics in Global History				
480	Senior Capstone Seminar				
497	Advanced Research & Writing				