

# Degree Program Student Learning Report

Revised May 2020

## Department of History & Political Science

### **BA in History**

For 2020-2021 Academic Year

#### **PART 1**

#### **Degree Program Mission and Student Learning Outcomes**

A. State the school, department, and degree program missions.

University Mission	School Mission	Department Mission	Degree Program Mission
Our mission is to ensure students develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve professional and personal goals in dynamic local and global communities.	Central to the mission of the School is the preparation of students to achieve professional and personal goals in their respective disciplines and to enable their success in dynamic local and global communities. Our strategy is to foster an academic setting of diverse curricula that inherently incorporates an environment of service and collegiality.	The mission of the Department of History and Political Science is to support discipline-specific degree programs as well as the University's general education program.	The Bachelor of Arts Degree in History is designed to help students develop research, analytical, critical thinking, and oral and written communications skills and competencies.

B. Align school purposes, department purposes, and program student learning outcomes with their appropriate University commitments.

<b>University Commitments</b>	<b>School Purposes</b>	<b>Department Purposes</b>	<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>
<p>To provide quality associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree opportunities and educational experiences which foster student excellence in oral and written communications, scientific reasoning and critical and creative thinking.</p>	<p>To provide quality associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree opportunities and educational experiences which foster student excellence in oral and written communications, scientific reasoning and critical and creative thinking.</p>	<p>The School offers innovative degrees, which focus upon developing skills in oral and written communication, critical thinking, creativity, empirical and evidenced-based inquiry, experimental investigation and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena, and innovative technology.</p>	<p>Offers innovative and quality teaching both within the classroom and through distance education.</p>
<p>To promote an atmosphere of academic and intellectual freedom and respect for diverse expression in an environment of physical safety that is supportive of teaching and learning.</p>	<p>The School educates its majors to think independently and have the knowledge, skills and vision to work in all types of situations and careers and communicate with all types of people.</p>	<p>Foster the skills of critical thinking, writing, research, and oral communication among our students</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through oral presentations and papers dealing with history.</p>
<p>To provide a general liberal arts education that supports specialized academic programs and prepares students for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.</p>	<p>The School offers general education courses of high quality and purpose that provide a foundation for life- long learning.</p>	<p>Serve the University and the community through the provision of quality general education courses.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate a solid understanding of how historical events have influenced the United States and/or the world. This will provide the background for lifelong learning and service.</p>
<p>To provide students with a diverse, innovative faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarly pursuits and continuous improvement of programs.</p>	<p>The School fosters a community of scholars among the faculty and students of the institution.</p>	<p>Foster values of scholarship, creativity, appreciation of diversity, and community service among our faculty, staff, and students.</p>	
<p>To provide university-wide student services, activities and resources</p>			

University Commitments	School Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
that complement academic programs.			
To support and strengthen student, faculty and administrative structures that promote shared governance of the institution.			
To promote and encourage student, faculty, staff and community interaction in a positive academic climate that creates opportunities for cultural, intellectual and personal enrichment for the University and the communities it serves.	The School fosters a community of scholars among the faculty and students of the institution.	Attract and retain high quality traditional and nontraditional students.	

**PART 2**  
**Revisit Proposed Changes Made in Previous Assessment Cycle**

Revisit each instructional/assessment change proposed in Part 5 of the degree program SLR for the preceding year. Indicate whether the proposed change was implemented and comment accordingly. Any changes the department implemented for this academic year, but which were not specifically proposed in the preceding report, should also be reported and discussed here. Please note if no changes were either proposed or implemented or this academic year.

Proposed Change	Implemented? (Y/N)	Comments
Military History degree incorporated into History degree. Because the number of military history majors has declined over the past several years, the department has decided to incorporate the military history program into the History major as an option.	Y	The department, through the university, has recommended that the regents delete the military history degree and incorporate the program under the history major as an option.

<p>SLO #2: American History majors often had to substitute courses to ensure that they could graduate on time. Thus, the department decided to count all upper-level American history classes (listed for the registrar) as meeting the requirements, although it is recommended that students take at least two courses from before the Civil War and two from after.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The department, through the university, has recommended that the regents allow American history majors to count all upper-level American history courses toward the degree.</p>
<p>SLO #2: History faculty noted that there were no courses dealing broadly with the Cold War or post-Cold War period, so students were not able to advance their knowledge in these areas. Thus, two new history courses, HIST 4333 The Cold War and HIST 4433 U.S. Conflicts after the Cold War, have been created and recommended to the regents for approval toward the degree.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The department, though the university, has recommended that the regents add the two courses to the degree.</p>
<p>No faculty have taught HIST 2463 or HIST 2473 (Seminar in the Civil War, Parts 1 and 2) in several years. Because this is a specialized course with unique requirements no longer extant in the faculty, the courses have been recommended for deletion.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The department, though the university, has recommended that the regents remove the two courses from the degree.</p>
<p>SLO 2: Because the faculty assessed that many of our students need a broader background in American history more than they need a background in historiography, which is often taught in graduate school, the department has replaced the requirement for HIST 3223 Interpreting History with the requirement that all majors must take both HIST 2483 American History to 1877 and HIST 2493 American History since 1877.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The department, though the university, has recommended that the regents replace History 3223 as a requirement by History 2493, which will ensure that all history majors have completed both History 2483 and History 2493.</p>
<p>SLO #1: Based on the peer review recommendation, add an oral presentation to the HIST 3243 <i>Writing and Research for Historians</i> course.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Based on the peer review recommendation, a requirement for an oral presentation was added to the HIST 3243 <i>Writing and Research for Historians</i> course.</p>

<p>SLO #2: Although no majors took the class this year, based on the previous iterations of the course, the History faculty decided that HIST 3223 <i>Interpreting History</i> is not the best course to establish a background for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society. Department faculty decided that it would be more effective to evaluate student learning for undergraduates by determining the retention and graduation rates of history majors instead.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The change is incorporated into the current Student Learning Report.</p>
<p>SLO #3: While there is no change to the performance standard listed, the exams will be changed to assess student knowledge and application of concepts as well as their writing skills. The exams will be a mixture of multiple choice, short answers, and take-home exam essays.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The professors have made the appropriate changes to the exams to reflect more accurately student knowledge, ability to apply concepts, and writing skills.</p>
<p>SLO #4: The performance standard is being clarified by the addition of a rubric, which more clearly defines goals for the SLO, and moved to SLO #1 so that faculty can determine student improvement between HIST 3243 Writing and Research and HIST 4511 Senior Capstone.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>An appropriate rubric has been added to the assessment to reflect student progress in meeting the requirements.</p>
<p>SLO #4: An oral assignment has been part of HIST 3243 <i>Writing and Research</i> and HIST 4511 <i>Senior Capstone</i>, but will now be assessed separately from the paper requirement.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>SLO #4 now reflects the requirement for an oral presentation.</p>

**PART 3**  
**Response to University Assessment Committee Peer Review**

The University Assessment Committee provides written feedback on departmental assessment plans through a regular peer review process.

This faculty-led oversight is integral to RSU’s commitment to the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness. UAC recommendations are not compulsory and departments may implement them at their discretion. Nevertheless, respond below to each UAC recommendations from last year’s peer review report. Indicate whether the recommendation was implemented and comment accordingly. Please indicate either if the UAC had no recommendations or if the program was not subject to review in the previous cycle.

Peer Review Feedback	Implemented (Y/N)	Comments
Assessment Measure #1B is a restatement of the SLO. It should be changed to an assessment measure.	Y	Assessment Measure #1B is now “Majors will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through a paper.”
Written and oral presentations should be separated.		Assessment Measure #4A is now “Majors will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through an oral presentation.”
Performance standard #1C should reflect an assessment rubric.	Y	Performance standard #1C now states “At least 80% of History majors will score at least “acceptable” on a four point rubric for Writing and Research and at least “satisfactory” for capstone. (Excellent, satisfactory, acceptable, not acceptable)
Information on rubric should be included in #1H conclusion rather than results.	Y	Information on rubric will be moved to conclusion.
Reviewers did not believe that we could measure lifelong learning or service in a diverse society.	Y	SLO #2 is being removed.
SLO #4 needs a rubric.	Y	SLO #4 and SLO #1 can be incorporated into two different objectives, focusing separately on written and oral presentation skills. A second rubric has been developed to assess oral presentations.

**PART 4**  
Evidence of Student Learning

Evidence and analyze student progress for each of the student learning outcomes (same as listed in Part I B above) for the degree program. See the *Appendix* for a detailed description of each component. Note: The table below is for the first program learning outcome. Copy the table and insert it below for each additional outcome. SLO numbers should be updated accordingly.

<b>A.</b>						
<b>Student Learning Outcome</b>						
<b>SLO #1: Students will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through papers dealing with U.S./global history.</b>						
<b>B.</b> <b>Assessment Measure</b>	<b>C.</b> <b>Performance Standard</b>	<b>D.</b> <b>Sampling Method</b>	<b>E.</b> <b>Sample Size (n)</b>	<b>F.</b> <b>Results</b>	<b>G.</b> <b>Standard Met (Y/N)</b>	
Majors will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through a research paper.	At least 80% of History majors will score at least "acceptable" on a four-point rubric for History 3243 <i>Writing and Research</i> and at least "satisfactory" for History 4511 <i>Senior Capstone</i> .	All majors in History 3243 <i>Writing and Research</i> and 4511 <i>Senior Capstone</i> are included.	35 <i>Writing and Research</i> , 5 <i>Senior Capstone</i>	Overall, 28 of 35 History 3243 <i>Writing and Research</i> students prepared acceptable or better papers.  For on-ground students, 11 students prepared excellent papers, 8 students prepared satisfactory papers, 4 students prepared acceptable papers, and 1 student prepared an unacceptable paper. One student failed to turn in a paper.  For distance learning students, 3 students turned in excellent papers, 1 turned in a satisfactory paper, 1 turned in an acceptable paper, and 1 student turned in an unacceptable paper. Three students failed to turn in a paper.  Four History 4511 <i>Senior Capstone</i> students prepared satisfactory or above papers and one completed an acceptable paper.	Y	
<b>H.</b>						

**A.  
Student Learning Outcome**

SLO #1: Students will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through papers dealing with U.S./global history.

<b>B. Assessment Measure</b>	<b>C. Performance Standard</b>	<b>D. Sampling Method</b>	<b>E. Sample Size (n)</b>	<b>F. Results</b>	<b>G. Standard Met (Y/N)</b>
----------------------------------	------------------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------------

**Conclusions**

Students in History 3243 *Writing and Research* that completed scaffolding assignments and made appropriate changes in response to guidance all seemed to complete at least adequate papers, with many being excellent and several others satisfactory.

The most significant concern in receiving acceptable or above papers in 3243 *Writing and Research* was that students did not turn in a paper. Several students, especially in the distance learning class, work full time and/or became overwhelmed by outside events, precluding them from completing the paper. Of those who turned in less than satisfactory papers, one refused to turn in scaffolding assignments so was unable to have her research reviewed before the final paper was due. She cherry picked sources, leading her to an incorrect thesis that could not be adequately proven. A second student turned in scaffolding assignments, but struggled to find adequate sources for his paper due to outside commitments.

The majority (80%) of students in History 4511 *Senior Capstone* completed satisfactory or above papers. Two papers achieved excellent results on the rubric while two others were satisfactory. This shows improvement over the student work in History 3243 *Writing and Research* and reflects that students have at least a satisfactory ability to demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through papers by the time they take the senior capstone class.

Rubric: 1. Directly addresses main questions or issues and adds new insight to the subject not covered in lectures, readings, or class discussions. Synthesizes new information with material covered in the course. 2. Clearly states argument. 3. Provides compelling and accurate evidence that supports the thesis. 4. Uses a wide range of academic sources. 5. Properly cites evidence in footnotes or endnotes.

Scale: Excellent, Satisfactory, Acceptable, Unacceptable



A. Student Learning Outcome						
SLO #2a: Students will continue in the program through graduation, providing the background for lifelong learning and service.						
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)	
Students will complete their degree, providing the background for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.	80% of majors who are eligible will enroll for the following semester.	All majors taking courses and have not graduated are included.	30	Two majors graduated in the fall, leaving 28 students to enroll in the spring. 27 of the 28 (96%) re-enrolled.	Y	
H. Conclusions						
Most students who were eligible to enroll for the Spring semester did so. In addition, all 3 first-time freshmen re-enrolled for the Spring semester as well. While this shows great success, not all majors continued so there is room for improvement. For AY 2019-2020, 100% of the initial cohort from 2014 graduated within 6 years. Data was not yet available for AY 2020-2021.						

A. Student Learning Outcome						
SLO #2b: Students will demonstrate a solid understanding of world geography to provide the background for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.						
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)	
Students will demonstrate their understanding through exams in	At least 80% of History majors will earn at least an 80% on exams in GEOG	All majors in the class are included.	0	No GEOG 2123 <i>World Regional Geography</i> classes were held this year.	N/A	

A. Student Learning Outcome						
SLO #2b: Students will demonstrate a solid understanding of world geography to provide the background for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.						
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)	
GEOG 2123 <i>World Regional Geography</i> .	2123 <i>World Regional Geography</i> .					
H. Conclusions						
Since no courses were offered this year, no data is available to make solid conclusions.						

A. Student Learning Outcome						
SLO #4: Students will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through oral presentations dealing with U.S./global history.						
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)	
Majors will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through an oral presentation.	At least 80% of History majors will score at least "acceptable" on a four-point rubric for Writing and Research and at least "satisfactory" for capstone.	All majors in History 3243 <i>Writing and Research</i> and 4511 <i>Senior Capstone</i> are included.	27	Overall, 21 HIST 3243 <i>Writing and Research</i> students completed acceptable or better presentations. (One on-ground class did not require presentations.) Of the on-ground students, 15 completed excellent presentations and 1 completed a satisfactory presentation. Two did not complete the assignment. For distance learning students, 4 students completed	N	

Learning outcomes assessment can generate actionable evidence of student performance that can be used to improve student success and institutional effectiveness. Knowledge of student strengths and weakness gained through assessment can inform faculty efforts to improve course instruction and program curriculum. Below discuss potential changes the department is considering which are aimed at improving student learning or the assessment process. Indicate which student learning outcome(s) will be affected and provide a rationale for each proposed change. These proposals will be revisited in next assessment cycle.

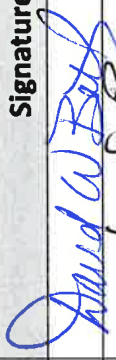




Proposed Change	Applicable Learning Outcomes	Rationale and Impact
Determine the determining the retention and graduation rates of history majors instead.		

**PART 6**  
Summary of Assessment Measures

- A. How many different assessment measures were used?
- B. List the direct measures (see appendix):
- C. List the indirect measures (see appendix):




**PART 7**  
Faculty Participation and Signatures

A. Provide the names and signatures of all full time and adjunct faculty who contributed to this report.



Faculty Name	Assessment Role	Signature
David Bath	Department representative/primary author	
Michael Beauchamp	Department Review Board	 email
Paul Hatley	Department Review Board	
Steve Housel	Department Review Board	
Jane Johansson	Department Review Board	 email

<b>A. Student Learning Outcome</b>						
<b>B. Assessment Measure</b>	<b>C. Performance Standard</b>	<b>D. Sampling Method</b>	<b>E. Sample Size (n)</b>	<b>F. Results</b>	<b>G. Standard Met (Y/N)</b>	
SLO #4: Students will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills through oral presentations dealing with U.S./global history.						
				excellent presentations and 1 completed a satisfactory presentation. Four did not complete the assignment. 19 students completed excellent presentations. 2 completed satisfactory presentations. 6 students failed to complete presentations.		
<b>H. Conclusions</b>						
<p>For HIST 3243 Writing and Research students, most did quite well. However, students did not achieve the standard as 6 students failed to complete the requirement. For the on-ground course, 16 of 18 students accomplished the task in an excellent or satisfactory manner while 2 did not complete the requirement. However, the distance learning class had as many students not complete the assignment as those completing it in an excellent manner. Those students who completed the assignment appear to have done very well and those who did not do well failed to complete the assignment.</p> <p>Rubric: 1. Directly addresses main questions or issues. Synthesizes new information with material covered in the course. 2. Clearly states argument. 3. Provides compelling and accurate evidence that supports the thesis. 4. Properly uses slides or other material to enhance presentation. 5. Knows material with limited use of notecards or other supportive material.</p> <p>Scale: Excellent, Satisfactory, Acceptable, Unacceptable</p>						

**PART 5**  
**Proposed Instructional or Assessment Changes**

Carolyn Taylor	Department Review Board	
Quinton Taylor	Department Review Board	
Sigismond Wilson	Department Review Board	

**B. Reviewed by:**

Titles	Name	Signature	Date
Department Head	Kenneth Hicks		6-8-21
Dean	Keith Martin		6/9/21

## Appendix

### Student Learning Outcome

Student learning outcomes are the observable or measurable results that are expected of a student following a learning experience. Learning outcomes may address knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values that provide evidence that learning has occurred. They can apply to a specific course, a program of study, or an institution. Outcomes should be worded in language that clearly implies a measurable behavior or quality of student work. Outcomes should also include Bloom's action verbs appropriate to the skill level of learning expected of students.

#### Examples:

*Students will be able to apply principles of evidence-based medicine to determine clinical diagnoses and implement acceptable treatment modalities.*

*Students will be able to articulate cultural and socioeconomic differences and the significance of these differences for instructional planning.*

### Assessment Measure

An assessment measure is a tool or instrument used to gather evidence of student progress toward an established learning outcome. Every program learning outcome should have at least one appropriate assessment measure. Learning outcomes are frequently complex, however, and may require multiple measures to accurately assess student performance. Assessment plans should try to incorporate a combination of direct and indirect assessment measures. Direct provide concrete evidence of whether a student has command of a specific subject or content area, can perform a certain task, exhibits a particular skill, demonstrates a certain quality in their work, or holds a particular value. Because direct measures tap into actual student learning, it is often viewed as the preferred measure type. Indirect measures assess opinions or thoughts about the extent of a student's knowledge, skills, or attitudes. They reveal characteristics associated with learning, but they only imply that learning has occurred. Both types of measures can provide useful insight into student learning and experiences in a program. Each also has unique advantages and disadvantages in terms of the type of data and information it can provide. Examples of common direct and indirect measures are listed below.

#### Direct Measures

- Comprehensive exams
- Class assignments
- Juried review of performances and exhibitions
- Internship or clinical evaluations
- Portfolio evaluation
- Pre/post exams
- Third-party exams such as field tests, certification exams, or licensure exams
- Senior thesis or capstone projects

#### Indirect Measures

- Graduate exit interviews
- Focus group responses
- Job placement statistics
- Graduate school placement statistics
- Graduation and retention rates
- Student and alumni surveys that assess perceptions of the program
- Employer surveys that assess perceptions of graduates
- Honors and awards earned by students and alumni.