

Program - Bachelor of Arts in History

College: Arts and Sciences

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Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, Student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its Students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides unequalled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

Department of Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences. The Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences Department at Northwestern State University is dedicated to the development of students for roles in academic, leadership, professional, and research careers in the challenging fields of criminal justice, history, public safety, law, and public service. Utilizing transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research and service the department produces graduates equipped to be productive members of society and a driving force in the economic development and improvement of the overall quality of life in the region. The department delivers Bachelor of Arts degrees in Criminal Justice and History and Bachelors of Science degrees in Unified Public Safety Administration with concentrations in Law Enforcement Administration, Fire and Emergency Medical Services Administration, Emergency Management Administration, and Public Facilities Management. Certificate programs in Pre-Law and Paralegal Studies and Public Policy and Administration are also available

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in addition to a Pre-law and Paralegal Studies concentration and minor. The department also delivers a Master's of Science degree in Homeland Security, and a Post-Master's certificate in Global Security and Intelligence.

History Program Mission Statement: The students who complete the History curriculum will have developed an understanding of contemporary events and ideas as they affect the locality, region, nation, and the world. Most particularly within the democratic environment of the United States, students will be prepared to fulfill their civic obligations as citizens. Students will be prepared for entry-level positions in any number of areas including teaching in public schools, business, industry, and government. In addition, they will be prepared for continued academic work in graduate programs.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the complexities of historical development and resulting historical interpretations.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 3990: Historical Methods

Measure 1.1.

Students enrolled in HIST 3990 (a required course for all history majors) must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either US or non-US history. The project requires an understanding and reading of primary and secondary sources. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. 75% of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the research paper assignment.

Findings: Target met for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.

Fall 2017 Data: 100% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Spring 2018 Data: 79% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Analysis:

Fall 2016 Data: 64.3% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Spring 2017 Data: 75% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Fall 2016 target not met due to 2 students withdrawing. 100% completion with grade C or higher for remaining students. Target met for Spring 2017. Based on an analysis of the AY 2016-2017 results and to drive student improvement in demonstrating

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knowledge of constructing an original research project, the program developed and deployed a rubric for the capstone research paper in Fall 2017. The goal was to prevent students from withdrawing from the class and to establish clear criteria for each assignment in the capstone course.

As a result, in AY 2017-2018 we achieved significant improvement as compared to AY 2016-2017. Implementation of rubrics discussed in Assessment 2016-2017 plan of action for assignments in HIST 3990 directly correlated to improved student performance.

Fall 2017 Data: 100% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Spring 2018 Data: 79% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 achieved the target of 75% of students with grade C or higher.

Action Plan: AY 17-18 success rate marks an improvement from AY 16-17 assessment. Department rubrics for assignments led to more clear expectations for work, and increased student performance.

To drive continuous improvement in student learning the department will increase the AY 2018-2019 goals for C or higher to 80%. With a higher goal, the faculty will institute new methods to deliver course expectations. The action plan will increase department goals for success rates.

Instructors will establish more contact with students who struggle in the class to improve goals set for the program. In addition, instructors will develop video instruction/tutorials for each assignment due in class. Tutorials will focus on methods to comprehend and complete assignments along with resources available to each student. The department will improve course delivery and provide additional links to students including sample assignments, databases, and research consultation information from reference librarians to improve student performance in the History degree's research class.

SLO 2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of major historical issues and their impact upon the US and the world.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HIST 1010: Early World Civilization

HIST 1020: Modern World Civilization

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HIST 2010: History of the United States to 1865

HIST 2020: History of the United States since 1865

HIST 3990: Historical Methods

Measure: 2.1.

All history majors are required to take HIST 1010, 1020, 2010, and 2020, which provide an opportunity for students to acquire foundational knowledge and understanding of the major events and developments that have shaped the US and world history. ***Beginning in Fall of 2017***, the program assessed foundational knowledge of major historical events through a capstone exam required of all students enrolled in History 3990 – required for graduation. 75% of students enrolled in each course will earn a composite grade of C (70%) or higher on each of the four sections of the capstone exam specifically related to this measure.

Findings:

Fall 2017 Data:

HIST 1010: 79.2% success

HIST 1020: 73.3% success

HIST 2010: 83.1% success

HIST 2020: 84.3% success

Spring 2018 Data:

HIST 1010: 78% success

HIST 1020: 83% success

HIST 2010: 94% success

HIST 2020: 61% success

Analysis: In 2016-2017 the target was partially met. Based on the analysis of the results the faculty determined that course grades were not acceptable in measuring student learning and that a Capstone exam targeting specific learning objectives would provide a better indicator of student success. As a result, in AY 2017-2018 the target was met except for HIST 2020 for Spring 2018. The use of a capstone exam represents a more accurate measure of comprehensive student knowledge as opposed to a simple overall class grade. Furthermore, administering the exams in the senior year represents a better method of evaluating retention in the intro classes for the degree.

Action Plan: Based on the analysis of the results from 2017-2018, in AY 2018-2019 the faculty will re-visit the capstone exams and review questions to ensure an absence of ambiguity or confusion. Underperforming exam sections will be analyzed, with existing questions revised or replaced. If one-course section continues to fall short of goals, the faculty will consider changing/amending questions for one of the capstone exam questions. We believe the capstone exam represents an accurate measurement of the comprehensive knowledge students retain at the end of their time as a student. The

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exams also constitute an improved measurement versus accumulation of class grades.

Measure: 2.2.

Students enrolled in HIST 3990 (a required course for all history majors) must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either US or non-US history. The project requires an understanding and reading of primary and secondary sources. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. 75% of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the research paper.

Findings: Target met for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.

Fall 2017 Data: 100% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Spring 2018 Data: 79% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Analysis:

Fall 2016 Data: 64.3% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Spring 2017 Data: 75% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Fall 2016 target not met due to 2 students withdrawing. 100% completion with grade C or higher for remaining students. Target met for Spring 2017. Based on the analysis of the AY 2016-2017 results the program developed and deployed a rubric for the capstone research paper in AY 2017-2018. The goal was to prevent students from withdrawing from the class and establish clear, understandable criteria for the capstone assignment.

As a result, in AY2017-2018 we achieved a significant improvement in comparison to AY2016-2017 results. Implementation of rubrics discussed in Assessment 2016-2017 action plan for assignments of HIST 3990 directly correlated to improved student performance. Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 achieved the target of 75% of students with grade C or higher.

Action Plan: Based on the analysis of the results from AY 2017-2018, the department will increase the AY 2018-2019 goals for C or higher to 80%. With a higher goal, the faculty will institute new methods to deliver course expectations. The action plan will increase department goals for success rates.

Instructors will establish more contact with students who struggle in the class to improve goals set for the program. In addition, instructors will develop video instruction/tutorials for each assignment due in class. Tutorials will focus on methods to comprehend and complete assignments along with resources available to each student. The department

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will improve course delivery and provide additional links to students including sample assignments, databases, and research consultation information from reference librarians to improve student performance in the History degree's research class.

SLO 3. Students will distinguish between historical knowledge and historical understanding

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

SST 1030: Social Sciences Seminar

HIST 3990: Historical Methods

Measure 3.1.

All history majors must take SST 1030 in the fall semester of their freshman year. Students enrolled in this course are required to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, and must complete written assignments based on their understanding of these kinds of historical texts. 75% of students enrolled will earn a grade of C on the written exam which specifically assesses this SLO.

Findings: Target met for Fall 2017

Fall 2017 Data: 82% success.

Analysis:

Fall 2016 Data: 63.3% Success

Fall 2017 Data: 82% Success

In Fall 2016 the target was not met due to non-completion of the class. Based on the analysis of the AY 2016-2017 results rubrics pertaining to course assignments were implemented. As a result, in Fall 2017 the goal was met. By clearly establishing expectations reinforced using rubrics for each assignment drastically improved student learning. The faculty has also increased contact with students and investigated how to better realign the curriculum to further strengthen student learning.

Action Plan: Based on the analysis of the results from 2017-2018 and to drive improvement in student learning in AY 2018-2019, the instructor will make both video tutorials and examples of completed assignments available to students. Expected results are an increase in assignment success rate to above 85%. The SST 1030 class constitutes the prerequisite for HIST 3990, the Capstone research class. It is the belief of the department that assignments for the SST class should serve as an introduction to

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the methods historians use in their craft. Therefore, more effort will be initiated to establish connectivity between the two seminars in the History degree.

Measure 3.2. *This measure was deleted from assessment in AY 2017-2018 as it was found to be duplicative of measure 2.2.*

SLO 4. Select and apply appropriate research methods and analytical skills

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

SST 1030: Social Sciences Seminar

HIST 3990: Historical Methods

Measure 4.1.

All history majors must take SST 1030 in the fall semester of their freshman year. Students enrolled in this course are required to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, and must complete an archival assignment based on their understanding of these kinds of historical texts. 75% of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the assignment.

Findings: Target met for Fall 2017

Fall 2017 Data: 82% success.

Analysis:

Fall 2016 Data: 63.3% Success

Fall 2017 Data: 82% Success

In Fall 2016 the target was not met due to non-completion of the class. Based on the analysis of the AY 2016-2017 results data rubrics pertaining to course assignments were implemented. As a result, in Fall 2017 the goal was met. Clearly established expectations in the form of rubrics for each assignment drastically improved Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 student learning results.

Action Plan: To drive improvement in student learning in addition to implementing more contact with students to ensure assignments are not missed, in AY 2018-1019, the instructor will make both video tutorials and examples of completed assignments available to students. Expected results will increase assignment success rate to above 85%. The SST 1030 class constitutes the prerequisite for Hist 3990, the Capstone research class. As freshmen, students centered learning will be centered on developing

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competencies to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and complete archival assignments based on their personal understanding of these historical events. It is also the belief of the department that assignments for the SST class should serve an introduction the methods historians use in their craft. Therefore, more efforts will be initiated to establish connectivity between the two seminars in the History degree.

SLO 5. Students will demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

SST 1030: Social Sciences Seminar

HIST 3990: Historical Methods

Measure 5.1.

Students enrolled in SST 1030 must complete a Thesis and Citation assignment that directly assesses this SLO. 75% of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or higher on the assignment

Findings: Target met for Fall 2017

Fall 2017 data: 94% success rate

Analysis:

Fall 2016 Data: 46.8% Success Rate

Fall 2017 Data: 94% Success Rate

In Fall 2016 the target was not met due to non-completion of the class. Based on the analysis of the action plan from AY 2016-217 in 2017-2017 data rubrics pertaining to course assignments were implemented to better align student expectations with assignment requirements. As a result, in Fall 2017 the goal was met. Clearly established expectations in the form of rubrics for each assignment drastically improved student performance and learning.

Action Plan: Based on the analysis of the results from 2017-2018 and to drive improvement in student learning in AY2018-2019, the faculty feel the changes implemented for 2017-2018 based upon our 2016-2017 assessment have had a positive impact on student learning and the student's ability to demonstrate proficiency in developing research questions. The realigned focus of HIST 3990 in thesis development and correct citation of credible sources has had a positive effect on the students during their final semesters in our program and indicates that our continuous improvement plan is producing enhanced learning for our students. In addition, the

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instructor will make both video tutorials and examples of completed assignments available to students. Expected results will increase assignment success rate to above 85%. The SST 1030 class constitutes the prerequisite for Hist 3990, the Capstone research class. It is the belief of the department that assignments for the SST class should serve an introduction the methods historians use in their craft. Therefore, more efforts will be initiated to establish connectivity between the two seminars in the History degree.

Measure 5.2.

Students enrolled in HIST 3990 (a required course for all history majors) must complete a 15-page research paper on a topic of their choice in either US or non-US history. The project requires an understanding and reading of primary and secondary sources. Students must demonstrate sufficient comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. 75% of students enrolled will earn a grade of C or better on the research paper.

Findings: Target met for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.

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AY 2017-2018 results represent a significant improvement from 2016-2017 data. Implementation of rubrics discussed in Assessment 2016-2017 for assignments of HIST 3990 directly correlated to improved student performance.

Fall 2017 Data: 100% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Spring 2018 Data: 79% success rate (Grades C or higher)

Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 achieved target of 75% of students with grade C or higher.

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Action Plan: Based on analysis of the results the department will increase the AY 2018-2019 goals for C or higher to 80%. With a higher goal, the faculty will institute new methods to deliver course expectations. The action plan will increase department goals for success rates. Instructors will establish more contact with students who struggle in the class to improve goals set for the program. In addition, instructors will develop video instruction/tutorials for each assignment due in class. Tutorials will focus on methods to comprehend and complete assignments along with resources available to each student. The department will improve course delivery and provide additional links to students including sample assignments, databases, and research consultation information from reference librarians to improve student performance in the History degree's research class.

Comprehensive Summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results:

Based on an analysis of the AY 16-17 data, the following changes were implemented in AY 2018-2019:

- The department took measures to more clearly evaluate student performance with the implementation of the HIST 3990 Capstone Exam.
- The department implemented assignment rubrics helped facilitate expectations for assignments and increased the department goals for student success.
- The department made deliberate efforts to increase student contact hours to provide spontaneously support to student learning.
- The department has developed a curriculum change whereby the SST 1030 will serve as the prerequisite for Hist 3990, the Capstone research class and as such, it will serve as the introduction to the methods historians use in their craft.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

The department took measures to more clearly evaluate student performance with the implementation of the HIST 3990 Capstone Exam. In addition, the implementation of assignment rubrics helped facilitate expectations for assignments and increased the department goals for student success. Additional video tutorials and instructions will be implemented to provide students with more resources and examples of how to complete each class assignment. Because early assignments build towards the research paper in the Capstone class, instructors will stay in close contact with students who fall behind or might struggle with assignments. In the past, the lack of completion of the SST 1030 and HIST 3990 class caused departmental goals to drop. Furthermore, linking the work

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in SST 1030 in the first year, and HIST 3990 in the senior year will bring about increased success in fulfilling all SLO measurements.

Based on 2017-18 data, key findings include the recognition that students in the history program overall had a high rate of success based on completion of the designated coursework and assignments. This is especially true for the mandatory research paper in HIST 3990, the program's capstone experience which connects all five student learning outcomes. The program's lowest success rates were associated with the required Capstone Exams – a required element of the HIST 3990 class required of all majors. Because the Capstone Exam is a new measurement, efforts will be made to track student success in the 2018-19 academic year. Sustained results which do not meet department goals will bring about efforts to amend individual exam questions.

Instructors will monitor student progress more closely and engage in more proactive communication to address any obstacles and difficulties students may be facing in the SST 1030 Seminar and HIST 3990 Capstone class. Additionally, the program will begin generating and deploying rubrics for the targeted assignments in the designated courses for more precise and effective assessment. In addition – instructors of the HIST 3990 Capstone class will employ more instructional video tutorials on all required class assignments. The same video tutorial aid will be used to continue achieving success in the SST 1030 seminar.