

Assessment Cycle 2018-2019

Bachelor of Arts in History

College: Arts and Sciences

Prepared by: Dr. James MacDonald

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Approved by: Greg Handel

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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 Bachelor 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 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.

Methodology: The assessment process for the History program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected by the program coordinator;
- (2) The program coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty and department head;
- (4) Consultations will be held with faculty teaching core, supporting and academic concentrations courses if required (show cause);
- (5) The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the department head, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

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

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project requires an understanding and reading of primary and secondary sources. Students must demonstrate comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. 80% of students enrolled will earn a grade of 70% or better on the research paper assignment.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2017-2018 the target was met. Based on the analysis of these results, in 2018-2019 the faculty instituted a new benchmark of 80% of students to earn a 70% or higher grade on the research paper assignment. To drive continuous improvement in student learning the department increased the AY 2018-2019 goals for 70% or higher to 80%. With a higher goal, the faculty instituted new methods to deliver course expectations. Instructors established more contact with students who struggled in the class to improve goals set for the program. In addition, instructors developed video instruction/tutorials for each assignment due in class. Tutorials focused on methods to comprehend and complete assignments along with resources available to each student. The department improved course delivery and provided 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. Instructors monitored student progress more closely and engaged in more proactive communication to address any obstacles and difficulties students were facing in the SST 1030 Seminar and HIST 3990 Capstone class. Additionally, the program began 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 employed more instructional video tutorials on all required class assignments. The same video tutorial aid was used to continue achieving success in the SST 1030 seminar.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the 2018-2019 data, the History program will raise the 2019-2020 goals to 82% of students achieving a 70% or better on the research paper. More individual written assignments will be administered and evaluated so that both completion rates for the class and student performance will improve. In addition, the program will implement QEP standards for the HIST 3990 class beginning in the Fall of 2019. Assignments including written reflection, and a class performance element will become part of the grading process.

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.

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HIST 1010: Early World Civilization

HIST 1020: Modern World Civilization

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 (70%) or higher on each of the four sections of the capstone exam specifically related to this measure.

Findings:

Fall 2018 Data:

HIST 1010: 82% success

HIST 1020: 55% success

HIST 2010: 63% success

HIST 2020: 82% success

Spring 2019 Data:

HIST 1010: 50% success

HIST 1020: 83% success

HIST 2010: 75% success

HIST 2020: 17% success

Analysis: Based on the analysis of the results from 2017-2018, in AY 2018-2019 the faculty re-visited the capstone exams and review questions to ensure an absence of ambiguity or confusion. Underperforming exam sections were analyzed, with existing questions revised or replaced. The faculty believe the capstone exam represents an accurate measurement of the comprehensive knowledge students retain at the end of their time as a student. The exams constituted an improved measurement versus accumulation of class grades.

In 2018-2019 the target was partially met for the Fall Semester, and partially met for the Spring Semester.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, the faculty plan to re-

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write questions that students struggled with in each of the four capstone classes.

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 comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. 80% of students enrolled will earn a grade of 70% or better on the research paper assignment.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2017-2018 the target was met. Based on the analysis of these results, in 2018-2019 the faculty instituted a new benchmark of 80% of students to earn a 70% or higher grade on the research paper assignment. To drive continuous improvement in student learning the department increased the AY 2018-2019 goals for 70% or higher to 80%. With a higher goal, the faculty instituted new methods to deliver course expectations. Instructors established more contact with students who struggled in the class to improve goals set for the program. In addition, instructors developed video instruction/tutorials for each assignment due in class. Tutorials focused on methods to comprehend and complete assignments along with resources available to each student. The department improved course delivery and provided 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. Instructors monitored student progress more closely and engaged in more proactive communication to address any obstacles and difficulties students were facing in the SST 1030 Seminar and HIST 3990 Capstone class. Additionally, the program began 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 employed more instructional video tutorials on all required class assignments. The same video tutorial aid was used to continue achieving success in the SST 1030 seminar.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the 2018-2019 data, the History program will raise the 2019-2020 goals to 82% of students achieving a 70% or better on the research paper. More individual written assignments will be administered and evaluated so that both completion rates for the class and student performance will improve. In addition, the program will implement QEP standards for the HIST 3990 class beginning in the Fall of 2019. Assignments including written reflection, and a class performance element will become part of the grading process.

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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 70% on the written exam which specifically assesses this SLO.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis: Based on the analysis of the results from 2017-2018, in AY 2018-2019, the instructors made both video tutorials and examples of completed assignments available to students. Expected results were 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 serve as an introduction to the methods historians use in their craft. Therefore, more effort has been initiated to establish connectivity between the two seminars in the History degree.

In Fall 2018 the goal of 75% was not met because 7 students failed to complete the assignment.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, in AY 2019-2020, the department will institute new measures to keep in touch with students about the necessity of completing assignments as well as linking examples of completed work to Moodle shells.

Measure 3.2. *This measure was deleted from assessment in AY 2018-2019 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

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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 70% or better on the assignment.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis: Based on the analysis of the results from 2017-2018, in AY 2018-2019, the instructors made both video tutorials and examples of completed assignments available to students. As a result, 70% of the students met the target; though this fell below the established target of 75%. 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 serve as an introduction to the methods historians use in their craft. Therefore, more effort has been initiated to establish connectivity between the two seminars in the History degree.

In 2018 the goal of 75% was not met because 7 students failed to complete the assignment.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the results in AY 2018-2019, in AY 2019-2020, the department will institute new measures to keep in touch with students about the necessity of completing assignments as well as linking examples of completed work to Moodle shells.

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 70% or higher on the assignment

Findings: Target not met.

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Analysis: In 2018 the goal of 75% was not met because 7 students failed to complete the assignment. 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.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the results from 2018-2019 and to drive improvement in student learning in AY2019-2020, the faculty feel more changes need to be implemented regarding positive impact on student learning and the student's ability to demonstrate proficiency in developing research questions. In AY 2019-2020, the department will institute new measures to keep in touch with students about the necessity of completing assignments as well as linking examples of completed work to Moodle shells. In addition, 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. 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 comprehension of the subject they research as well as the historiography of that subject. 80% of students enrolled will earn a grade of 70% or better on the research paper assignment.

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in the SST 1030 Seminar and HIST 3990 Capstone class. Additionally, the program began 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 employed more instructional video tutorials on all required class assignments. The same video tutorial aid was used to continue achieving success in the SST 1030 seminar.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the 2018-2019 data, the History program will raise the 2019-2020 goals to 82% of students achieving a 70% or better on the research paper. More individual written assignments will be administered and evaluated so that both completion rates for the class and student performance will improve. In addition, the program will implement QEP standards for the HIST 3990 class beginning in the Fall of 2019. Assignments including written reflection, and a class performance element will become part of the grading process.

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

Based on an analysis of the AY 17-18 data, the following changes were implemented in AY 2019-2020:

- The department took measures to more clearly evaluate student performance with the implementation of the HIST 3990 Capstone Exam.
- The department evaluated and re-wrote ambiguous questions in the HIST 3990 Capstone Exam.
- The department took measures to link sample assignments to both the SST 1030 class and HIST 3990 class.
- Instructors will require research consultations from students by phone or during office hours to discuss larger assignments in the SST 1030 and HIST 3990 classes.
- A new benchmark of 82% of students earning a grade of 70% or better in the Historical Methods class was established.
- The department implemented assignment rubrics helped facilitate expectations for assignments and increased the department goals for student success.
- Instructors continued to add instructional video tutorials aimed at helping students' complete assignments.

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- The department made deliberate efforts to increase student contact hours to provide 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 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 2018-19 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 2019-20 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.