



## Final Annual Report

### Tennessee Tech University

#### President

#### Provost

#### College of Arts and Sciences

#### History



#### Departmental Mission Statement

**Department/Unit Contact:** Jeff Roberts

#### Mission/Vision/Goal Statement

The Department of History offers a wide array of courses to diverse student populations. The department provides General Education instruction to a large number of students in the state-required American history sequence, while Western and World Civilization sequences satisfy TBR humanities requirements. In addition, department faculty offer numerous specialized courses that attract majors and non-majors alike.

The department has developed and maintains a comprehensive and successful curriculum for history majors. The programs are designed to provide future historians with the tools and knowledge for successful graduate study in the discipline, and to prepare graduates for careers in education, law, public service or business. Majors are expected to think analytically, ascertain facts and make objective judgments, and write clearly, communicating the results of reasoned analysis.

The department shares with the University both its broader commitment to cross-cultural understanding and its special obligation to serve the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee.



#### Program Goal - Commitment to Flight Plan

##### Define Goal

The Department of History will help Tennessee Tech progress via its commitment to Flight Plan. This involves at least one initiative in all four target areas: Improved undergraduate experience, transform technology, create distinctive programs and expand financial resources.

##### Intended Outcomes / Objectives

Under improved undergraduate experience:



1. The Department will provide opportunities to highlight undergraduate research via an annual Lyceum and participation in Phi Alpha Theta conferences.
2. The Department will increase access and retention via survey sections designed specifically for international students and experimental "Maymester" sections.

Under transform technology:

3. The Department will increase its involvement with the I-Cube initiative
4. The Department will increase its presence on social media

Under create distinctive programs:

5. The Department will work with other programs to establish a Religious Studies minor.
6. The Department will expand its Public History and Internship opportunities

Under expand financial resources:

7. The Department will establish a new endowment designed to provide fall semester speakers (complmenting an existing endowment which allows for such every spring)

Note: The Maymester sections noted in #2 above are also applicable here



### **Student Learning Goal 1: Research Paper Proficiency**

#### **Define Goal**

All students completing a degree in History at Tennessee Technological University will demonstrate the ability to research and write a scholarly paper of professional quality.

#### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives**

The Department faculty have defined successful student performance in History 4990 according to the following rubric, as one who is able to:

- a. Formulate an original thesis and defend it in a sustained argument - OR - Compile and historiographic essay demonstrating mastery of relevant literature
- b. Make effective use of primary sources (if possible) - AND/OR - Demonstrate and ability to professionally evaluate and employ secondary sources.
- c. Make proper use of citation conventions, thereby avoiding plagiarism.
- d. Use standard written English effectively and appropriately.
- e. Present a well-organized paper.
- f. Place the research topic and/or literature survey in broader historical context.
- g. Demonstrate critical thinking, reasoned analysis, and/or problem solving.



h. Follow any additional directions as assigned by the professor.



### **Student Learning Goal 2: Participation in Co-curricular Activities**

#### **Define Goal**

The department desires to instill in students an appreciation of the past, to include a desire to explore history beyond the classroom.

#### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives**

We expect at least 50% of all history majors to participate in extracurricular activities related to the discipline. Activities may include membership in the History Club or Phi Alpha Theta honor society, presentation of research, participation in field trips, or attendance at special lectures, cultural events, and historical conferences.



### **Student Learning Goal 3: Factual Knowledge/Standardized Testing**

#### **Define Goal**

History majors will demonstrate a reasonable command of general factual knowledge by achieving at least a mean score relative to national averages on discipline related exams.

#### **Intended Outcomes / Objectives**

History majors will demonstrate their factual knowledge competence by scoring at or above the national average on the ACAT achievement tests.



### **Assessment: ACAT Standardized testing**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** #3

**Type of Tool:** Exit Exam

#### **Rationale**

Required by state authorities.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Once per semester (in Methods course)



### **Assessment: Academic Audit (peer review)**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** #1, #2, #3

**Type of Tool:** Peer Assessment



### Rationale

Required by the Tennessee Board of Regents

**Frequency of Assessment:** Once every four years

### **Assessment: Alumni Survey**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** #1, #2, #3

**Type of Tool:** Other

### Rationale

Alumni surveys, we believe, are the ultimate litmus test of a successful program.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Once every ten-twelve years

### **Assessment: Annual department reports**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** #2

**Type of Tool:** Checklist, Tracking Spreadsheet

### Rationale

Required by the college.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Once per year

### **Assessment: Historical Methods and Senior Seminar Courses**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** #1

**Type of Tool:** Capstone Project

### Rationale

History graduates should have the ability to research and write a scholarly paper of publishable quality. These courses give them the tools and opportunity to demonstrate such.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Every semester

### **Assessment: IDEA teaching evaluations**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** #3

**Type of Tool:** Other

### Rationale

Required by the university.



**Frequency of Assessment:** Every semester



**Assessment: Value added testing**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: #3**

**Type of Tool:** Gap Analysis

**Rationale**

Demonstrates student learning in numeric fashion.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Varied use among professors, at least once per year



**Results: ACAT Standardized Test Results**

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Student Outcome Goal #3

**Results**

Two of the five students taking the fall 2016 ACAT scored above 95th percentile. The three others were slightly below the national average, but the overall class average was well above it. Spring's scores were more uneven and frankly disappointing. One student scored in the 89th percentile, and three others were above average. Seven, however, were below average. One scored in the bottom tenth. The overall weighted average for both semesters combined was 46%, with only six of sixteen individuals above the national average. We will review these results at our fall meeting.

**Attachments**

No items to display.



**Results: Senior Seminar Results**

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Student Learning Outcome #1

**Results**

Dr. Troy Smith taught the fall, 2016 seminar on The History of Race in America. Dr. Kent Dollar taught the spring, 2017 seminar on the American Civil War. While the majority of students met all requirements of the rubric and thus received A grades, some did not. The fine performance of the majority indicates achievement of our goal. That not everyone receives the same grade is indicative that students were held accountable for failing to meet all the standards of the rubric, at least in the spring semester. Those falling short in spring, 2017 lacked in rubric items a, c, and g. The chair met with Dr. Smith to discuss grades in his section. Standards will be reviewed at our next department meeting this fall.

**Attachments**

No items to display.

**Results: Student Participation in Co-Curricular Activities**

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Student Outcome Goal #2

**Results**

Due to lack of interest, and low membership in Phi Alpha Theta, there was no History Lyceum in 2017. This was the only one of our seven flight plan goals that the department did not achieve. We hope to revive it in 2018. Still, the department met its goal of 50% participation through other activities. For example, some faculty offered field trips. Dr. Susan Laningham took a group of twelve to Rome over Thanksgiving.

Dr. Jeff Roberts took our entire freshman class (History 1066) to the James K. Polk home in Columbia, in October, 2016. The department also hosted its annual Winchester Lecture featuring Dr. George Webb on March 26, 2017. He addressed an estimated crowd of 300 in Derryberry Hall. Dr. Katherine Osburn spoke to a similarly sized crowd at the Inaugural Pauline Womack lecture the previous fall. Two of our majors, Allison Wittmer and Emily Thomas, became the first recipients of a Yreka Grant which enabled them to conduct research in England in the summer of 2017. Overall, we are confident that at least 75% of our majors participated in extracurricular activities during 2016-2017.

**Attachments**

No items to display.