

History BS_BA: 2018-2019

Definition of Unit

Providing Department:

History

Department/Unit Contact:

Jeff Roberts

Mission/Vision 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.

Student Learning Goal 1: Research Paper Proficiency

Define Goal:

Graduates will be able to think analytically, ascertain facts and make objective judgments, and write clearly, communicating the results of reasoned analysis.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives:

Student will demonstrate the ability to research and write a scholarly paper of professional quality.

DRILL DOWN-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Assessment Goal 1: Historical Methods and Senior Seminar Courses

Frequency of Assessment:

Every semester

Rationale:

Students capstone projects, completed in History 4900, are evaluating using a faculty developed rubric. The rubric includes the following criteria:

- a. Formulate an original thesis and defend it in a sustained argument**
- 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.**

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Results Goal 1: Senior Seminar Results

Results:

Dr. Elizabeth Propes taught the fall, 2018 seminar. Dr. Allen Driggers taught the spring, 2019 seminar. Dr. Propes had six students, while Dr. Driggers had twelve. One student took both seminars. Only five out of eighteen students met all requirements of the rubric and thus received A grades. While each paper had enough merit for passing grades (there was one student who withdrew late from each course, without refund) that not everyone received the same grade is indicative that students were held accountable for failing to meet all the standards of the rubric. Those who received "C" grades typically lacked in more than one area. The department did review and confirm the standards during our 2018 peer review, choosing to eliminate the historiographic option (the second half of item 'a') in future classes following confirmation from our reviewer.

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.

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RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Assessment Goal 2: Student Participation in Co-curricular Activities

Frequency of Assessment:

Once per year

Rationale:

Tracking spreadsheet for the number of students who attend each co-curricular activity.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Results Goal 2: Student Participation in Co-Curricular Activities

Results:

We excelled again regarding student activities in 2018-2019. We certainly surpassed the goal of 50% participation. The majority of our faculty offered field trips. Dr. Susan Laningham took three students to present papers at the Phi Alpha Theta State Conference at Belmont University, and one of our majors, Hannah Cowan, won first prize. Dr. Jeff Roberts took our freshman class (History 1066) to the Alvin C. York Site on October 8 (the anniversary of his

heroism), and four of his Historical Methods students there on Armistice Day. Both groups got to see reenactments (especially the latter, who saw machine guns and aircraft) along with the museum and memorials. A few of our seniors even participated in the reenactments. Dr. Mike Birdwell also led several tours (some involving students, some not) to the York Site, and took his Public History class to several sites in Cookeville and the surrounding areas. Dr. Roberts partnered with Dr. Paula Hinton to drive seven majors to various sites in Alabama and Georgia (Horseshoe Bend, Little White House, Fort Benning, Tuskegee Institute) for Spring Break. The students even had the chance to meet former President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Roselyn Carter in Plains, Georgia. Dr. Krystal Akehinmi, in her very first year on campus, took students to Fisk University and other sites in Nashville. The department hosted its annual Winchester Lecture featuring Dr. Carole Bucy in the spring of 2019. She commemorated Tennessee's role in passing the 19th Amendment for a large crowd (estimate 400) in Derryberry Hall. Dr. Theda Perdue, a nationally-recognized expert on Native Americans, spoke to somewhat smaller crowd (~150) at the third annual Pauline Womack lecture the previous fall. Lastly, Dr. Allen Driggers has been working to revitalize our History Club with a variety of guest speakers, pizza parties (Halloween for example) and the like. Dr. Susan Laningham started a new organization, Clio's Blue Stockings, targeting female majors, which held three events last spring. All-in-all, we are confident that at least 75% of our majors participated in extracurricular activities during 2018-2019, again, far surpassing this goal. We are increasingly concerned, however, that some students who appear to be attempting to complete most of their requirements online will miss such opportunities entirely.

Attachments:

Student Learning Goal 3: Factual Knowledge/Standardized Testing

Define Goal:

History majors will demonstrate a reasonable command of general factual knowledge.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives:

History majors will achieve a score at or above the national average on the ACAT achievement tests.

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RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Assessment Goal 3: ACAT Standardized testing

Frequency of Assessment:

Once per semester (in Methods course)

Rationale:

The ACAT is an exit exam for students majoring in history. The ACAT includes # number of content areas. List of content areas:

Exam is administered in the senior seminar course.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Results Goal 3: ACAT Standardized Test Results

Results:

Six students took the fall 2018 ACAT. One scored in the 75th percentile, but all others were below average, including one who scored in the 8th percentile. The top four averaged 51, but the overall average was 40. Given that these were predominantly European History students, forced to take American History tests, such scores are not really disturbing. Furthermore, some students did well in their specialty areas. Two who studied military history, for example, made raw scores of 557 and 570 (500 is average) on that section (#3) of the test.

Spring's scores were better. The overall average, for eleven students, was 52, with six individuals above average. One student scored in the 98th percentile(!),

and another in the 91st. On the other hand, one scored in the 5th percentile, and some failed to even enter their names correctly. We suspect senioritis or just flippancy, especially from the 5-er, who also wrote the best paper in the class(!). Perhaps most disturbing was a student who scored in the 13th percentile, yet came to us from a community college with a 4.0 GPA.

Attachments: