

## History BS\_BA: 2019-2020

### **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 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. The department also 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. 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 Performance**

#### **Results:**

A total of 26 students completed the senior seminar, ten students in Fall 2019 and sixteen students in Spring 2020. Eleven out of twenty-six students met all requirements of the rubric. A few of these papers truly are of publishable quality (one has been submitted for review). The other students were held accountable for failing to meet all the standards of the rubric, coming up short on either item a, d, e, g, or h.

Spring semester proved problematic when the university moved online following spring break. By this point, all students had their topics and had at least begun their research. The online environment worked better for some than others. While some thrived amidst extended research time others seemed to lag without regular in-class encouragement. At semester's end, five students simply had not produced papers of sufficient quality. Given the circumstances of the pandemic, Dr. Roberts chose to allow these students incomplete grades, rather than F's. He gave them the summer to complete their work. Three of these students had to delay their graduation from spring to summer.

Four students have since finished their project. One changed her subject entirely, and with better motivation, earned a B. Two others who struggled with both writing and analysis (rubric items d

and g), received "C" grades. The "D" paper was weak in those areas and item h as well - the student did not complete all her other assignments. One student has yet to finish.

**Attachments: History 4955 Rubric Chart for Assessment 2020.xlsx**

## **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.

DRILL DOWN-----

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:**

The Covid-19 pandemic dramatically curtailed our student activities in 2019-2020. For the first time in reporting we cannot say with absolute certainty that we surpassed our goal of 50% participation, though we at least got close before we began to shelter in place. Things started well when we hosted the fourth annual Pauline Womack lecture in the fall. Popular radio personality Bill Landry drew a huge crowd. Two joint projects, Constitution Day and Law Night, were also well attended. Dr. Allen Driggers and Club President Jenny Huffman hosted a handful of History Club activities. One study abroad trip also transpired when Drs. Susan Laningham and Kent Dollar took eight students to Rome over Thanksgiving week.

The university cancelled all plans for spring break adventures (which included a seminar trip to Washington DC). Plans to host the Phi Alpha Theta (PAT) State Conference fell through as well. The national organization cancelled the meeting, and they have cancelled next year's as well (Hannah Cowan, who won first prize in 2019, had no chance to defend her title). For the first time in over a decade there was no Winchester Lecture in the spring (we had scheduled it in conjunction with PAT) . Jenny's December graduation left History Club bereft of energetic leadership until Covid-19 short-circuited any remaining opportunities. Some students did offer helpful assistance to victims of the March 3 tornado. Graduating senior Caitlyn Harris in particular, working through the Baptist Student Union, coordinated several relief activities before the pandemic intervened.

Opportunities for co-curricular activities remain limited as the crisis continues. One optimistic note is that Constitution Day is scheduled for September 17, as an online webinar.

#### **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.

DRILL DOWN-----

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:** U.S. 1820 to 1890; U.S. Colonial to 1763; U.S. Military/Diplomatic; U.S. 1763 to 1820

Exam is administered in the senior seminar course.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Results Goal 3: ACAT Standardized Test Results**

**Results:**

Fall 2019

Area	Standard Score	%ile
U.S. 1820 to 1890	463	36
U.S. Colonial to 1763	467	37
U.S. Military/Diplomatic	507	53
U.S. 1763 to 1820	449	31
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	463	36

Spring 2020

Area	Standard Score	%ile
U.S. 1820 to 1890	593	82
U.S. Colonial to 1763	586	81
U.S. Military/Diplomatic	569	75
U.S. 1763 to 1820	550	69
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	596	83

**Attachments:**