Department Name: History Department

Date Submitted and Academic Year: Fall 2009, for AY 2009-10

Department Mission Statement: The History Department is dedicated to the effective teaching of history to undergraduate and graduate students, to the practice of historical scholarship, and to the cultivation of an intellectually stimulating and productive community of historians.

Department Assessment Coordinator: Jim German

Update on prior years’ “Application of Assessment Results:

1. In third year of new required course for majors, HIST 302—Fighting Words, that concentrates on theory and methods in the discipline, in order to enhance achievements on SLOs 2 and 3.

2. In second year of planning for introductory versions of HIST 101, 102, 201, and 202 that are specifically tailored for students in the major program (as distinct from their larger general education audience), in order to enhance achievements on SLOs 1 and 2.
**Intended Student Learning Outcome #1**

Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and synthesize multiple primary source documents relating to historical events, employing historical judgment and arriving at a coherent interpretation.

**Connection to Univ/Dept Mission**

The college mission seeks to cultivate habits of “critical thought” and “discovery” in students grounded in the liberal arts. This outcome is integral to the department’s mission that centers on the effective teaching of history to undergraduate students, to the practice of historical scholarship, and to the cultivation of an intellectually stimulating and productive community of historians.

**Links with other programs/departments**

*Gen Ed Component*

Criteria for AH and WC both stress the critical use of primary sources, particularly the selection and interpretation of historical data.

*Related Courses*

Reading and interpreting primary sources is emphasized in all history courses. Primary source exercises are built into the structure of HIST 100, 101, 102, 201, 201, 225, 230, 302 and 480, as well as many other courses.

**Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)**

The direct measure for SLO #1 occurs in HIST 480—Senior Seminar in History, the capstone course required for all majors. In that course, students complete an original research paper based on primary sources. A random sample of the papers (25%) are read (blind) and scored against the three criteria listed below by two members of the department’s Assessment Committee. Each paper is judged as meeting, marginally meeting, or not meeting each of the criteria.

Measure 1. Paper analyzes one or more historical document.
Measure 2. Paper synthesizes information from two or more historical documents.
Measure 3. Paper makes reasoned historical judgments about historical documents.

**Data Source/Results & Analysis (N=15)**

(Department measurements do not distinguish between “meeting” and “exceeding” expectations.)

Measure 1. Paper analyzes one or more historical document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exceeding Expectations</td>
<td>___%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approaching Expectations</td>
<td>___%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Meeting Expectations</td>
<td>___%</td>
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Measure 2. Paper synthesizes information from two or more historical documents.

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<tr>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exceeding Expectations</td>
<td>___%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Expectations</td>
<td>___%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Measure 3. Paper makes reasoned historical judgments about historical documents.

____% of students Exceeding Expectations
____% of students Meeting Expectations
____% of students Approaching Expectations
____% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement
**Intended Student Learning Outcome #2**

Students will critically analyze and evaluate multiple historical interpretations of significant historical events and come to reasoned evaluative historical judgments about them.

**Connection to Univ/Dept Mission**

The College mission seeks to cultivate habits of “critical thought” and “discovery” in students grounded in the liberal arts. This outcome is integral to the department’s mission that centers on the effective teaching of history to undergraduate students, to the practice of historical scholarship, and to the cultivation of an intellectually stimulating and productive community of historians.

**Links with other programs/departments**

- **Gen Ed Component**
  
  AH criteria stress the importance of understanding the “issues and methodologies” involved in interpreting American history. XC criteria stress the importance of understanding the “issues and methodologies” involved in understanding peoples and cultures that do not derive primarily from Europe. WC criteria call for an exploration of the “nature of historical inquiry.”

- **Related Courses**
  
  Historical interpretation is emphasized in all history courses. Interpretive exercises are built into the course structure of HIST 302 and 480. Historical interpretations are considered, analyzed, and critiqued in the dozens of courses numbered from HIST 304 to HIST 402, each of which considers various interpretations of historical events in particular geographical and temporal locations.

**Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)**

The direct measure for SLO #2 occurs in HIST 480—Senior Seminar in History, the capstone course required for all majors. In that course, students must relate the thesis of an original research paper that they write to interpretations published by professional historians, showing how their research supports one interpretation over another. A random sample of the papers (25%) are read (blind) and scored against the three criteria listed below by two members of the department’s Assessment Committee. Each paper is judged as meeting, marginally meeting, or not meeting each of the criteria.

1. Paper analyzes a recognized historical interpretation.
2. Paper compares and contrasts two or more historical interpretations.
3. Paper makes reasoned evaluative judgments about historical interpretations.

**Data Source/Results & Analysis (N=15)**

(Department measurements do not distinguish between “meeting” and “exceeding” expectations.)

Measure 1. Paper analyzes a recognized historical interpretation.
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Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan – History Department

____% of students Exceeding Expectations
____% of students Meeting Expectations
____% of students Approaching Expectations
____% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Measure 2. Paper compares and contrasts two or more historical interpretations.
   ____% of students Exceeding Expectations
   ____% of students Meeting Expectations
   ____% of students Approaching Expectations
   ____% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Measure 3. Paper makes reasoned evaluative judgments about historical interpretations.
   ____% of students Exceeding Expectations
   ____% of students Meeting Expectations
   ____% of students Approaching Expectations
   ____% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement
Intended Student Learning Outcome #3
Students will demonstrate an ability to present effective written historical arguments in forms proper to the discipline.

Connection to Univ/Dept Mission
The college mission identifies the liberally educated citizen as its desirable product. Surely such a citizen can write effective argument grounded in thorough and judicious research. This outcome is integral to the department’s mission that centers on the effective teaching of history to undergraduate students, to the practice of historical scholarship, and to the cultivation of an intellectually stimulating and productive community of historians who write.

Links with other programs/departments
- Gen Ed Component
FW, and especially WI criteria stress the importance of being able to create a clear argument in correct written English that is grounded in solid research and consistent with the standards of an academic discipline.

- Related Courses

Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)
The direct measure for SLO #3 occurs in HIST 480—Senior Seminar in History, the capstone course required for all majors. In that course, students must present their original research in a paper consistent with the standards of the discipline. A random sample of the papers (25%) are read (blind) and scored against the three criteria listed below by two members of the department’s Assessment Committee. Each paper is judged as meeting, marginally meeting, or not meeting each of the criteria.

1. Paper has a recognizable historical thesis.
2. Paper is mechanically and grammatically sound.
3. Paper is presented in a form consistent with the standards of the discipline.

Data Source/Results & Analysis (N=15)
(Department measurements do not distinguish between “meeting” and “exceeding” expectations.)

Measure 1. Paper has a recognizable historical thesis.
   ____% of students Exceeding Expectations
   ____% of students Meeting Expectations
   ____% of students Approaching Expectations
   ____% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Measure 2. Paper is mechanically and grammatically sound.
   ____% of students Exceeding Expectations
   ____% of students Meeting Expectations
   ____% of students Approaching Expectations
   ____% of students Not Meeting Expectations
Measure 3. Paper is presented in a form consistent with the standards of the discipline.

____% of students Exceeding Expectations
____% of students Meeting Expectations
____% of students Approaching Expectations
____% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement
SUNY Potsdam
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan – History Department

**Intended Student Learning Outcome #4**
Students will demonstrate an ability to employ the cognitive skills and content knowledge necessary for graduate education and for professional success in secondary education and other fields.

**Connection to Univ/Dept Mission**
The college mission seeks to prepare students for lives as engaged, global citizens by, in part, grounding their education in the liberal arts. This outcome is integral to the department’s mission that centers on the effective teaching of history to undergraduate students and to the cultivation of an intellectually stimulating and productive community of historians.

**Links with other programs/departments**
- Gen Ed Component
- Related Courses

This goal is particularly linked to the Teacher Education certification program in Secondary Social Studies Education.

**Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)**
The direct measure for SLO #4 occurs in HIST 480—Senior Seminar in History, the capstone course required for all majors. In that course, students must present their original research in a paper consistent with the standards of the discipline. A random sample of the papers (25%) are read (blind) and scored against the criterion listed below by two members of the department’s Assessment Committee. Each paper is judged as meeting, marginally meeting, or not meeting the criterion.

- Paper offers a reasoned historical interpretation.

The indirect measure for SLO #4 is data generated from the NSSE, which will be administered to all students enrolled in HIST 480—Senior Seminar in History, during spring semester, 2009.

The content test in history in teacher education social studies certification program provides an additional direct measure.

**Data Source/Results & Analysis (N=15)**
(Department measurements do not distinguish between “meeting” and “exceeding” expectations.)

Direct measure: Paper offers a reasoned historical interpretation.

- ____% of students Exceeding Expectations
- ____% of students Meeting Expectations
- ____% of students Approaching Expectations
- ____% of students Not Meeting Expectations
Indirect measure: NSSE Results.

**Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement**

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**Intended Student Learning Outcome #5**
Students will demonstrate achievement of the above SLOs in multiple contexts across time, geography, and culture.

**Connection to Univ/Dept Mission**
The college mission seeks to prepare students for global citizenship, in part, by fostering an appreciation and respect for the varieties of human experience. For the department, an inculcating in awareness of our student’s own time, space, and culture, as well as those of others, is essential to the effective teaching of history, the practice of historical scholarship, and the cultivation of an intellectual stimulating community of historians.

**Links with other programs/departments**
- **Gen Ed Component**
The General Education program singles out American History, Western Civilization, and Other World Civilizations as specific areas with which graduates should demonstrate some familiarity. These General Education areas are replicated in our major program’s distribution requirement that students complete at least one upper division course each in North American History, European History, and Asia, African, or Latin American History.

- **Related Courses**
Each of the history courses numbered from 304 to 479 considers some aspect or aspects of the history of North America, Europe, Africa, Asia, or Latin America. The area considered is evident in the course titles.

**Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)**
The measure for SLO #5 is built into the major program requirements, which demand that students complete at least one upper division course each in North American History, in European History, and in African, Asian, or Latin American History. The completion of each of the three courses with a grade of 2.0 or higher, qualifies the student for enrollment in a section of HIST 480—Senior Seminar in History, with a special focus in any of the three areas. The department employs two direct measures, both derived from transcript analysis.

The first measures the number of courses each graduating senior completed that explores the history of a particular time and place.
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Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan – History Department

Exceeding Expectations—More than five courses, with minimum grade of 2.3, across space/time
Meeting Expectations—Five courses, with minimum grade > 2.3, across space/time
Approaching Expectations—Five courses, with minimum grade < 2.3, across space/time
Not Meeting Expectations—Fewer than five courses with minimum grade < 2.0, across space/time

The second measures level of achievement.

Exceeding Expectations—Average grade of 3.3, in courses across space/time
Meeting Expectations—Average grade of 2.3, in courses across space/time
Approaching Expectations—Average grade of 2.3, in courses across space/time
Not Meeting Expectations—Average grade of < 2.0, in courses across space/time

Data Source/Results & Analysis: (Transcript analysis of graduating seniors, N = 29)

Measure 1: Number of courses (HIST 304-479) completed at minimum grade.
___% of students Exceeding Expectations
___% of students Meeting Expectations
___% of students Approaching Expectations
___% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Measure 2: Number of courses (HIST 304-479) completed at level of achievement.
___% of students Exceeding Expectations
___% of students Meeting Expectations
___% of students Approaching Expectations
___% of students Not Meeting Expectations

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

Summary of Action Plans for 2008-09

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