

**Department Name: History**

**COLLEGE: College of Social Sciences**

**Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (Soap)**

**I. Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department of History is to provide rigorous, deliberate and directed study that increases the knowledge of students and prepares them for careers in the discipline of history and the social sciences. The department has four specific goals or aims that are the focus of the undergraduate curriculum 1) providing quality educational that enhances the teaching and learning experiences of both faculty and students 2) offering specific courses to meet the needs of those students who plan to also obtain a credential and become teachers in California 3) preparing students who plan to pursue a graduate degree 4) graduating students with specific critical thinking and writing skills that will enable them to pursue a diverse array of careers . Our department’s undergraduate mission will complement the missions of the College of Social Sciences and those of California State University, Fresno.

**II. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

**Goal 1:** Students will acquire in-depth historical knowledge that increases their understanding and prepares them for careers in history related fields and/or the pursuit of advanced academic degrees

**Student Learning Outcome 1:** Students will demonstrate sufficient and appropriate knowledge in regard to specific historical issues and events and will be able to assess scholarly arguments.

**BENCHMARKS:**

- A. G.E. courses (lower division courses taken primarily by non-majors) – Students will demonstrate basic knowledge of historical events. For example, students would be able to identify the key factors that led to the outbreak of the American Revolution, or they would be able to identify and explain the causes of the Civil War, or they would be able to explain the key aspects of Buddhism. Students will be able to identify and accurately different points of view in regard to historical events.
- B. Lower-division courses: Students will demonstrate more than a basic knowledge of historical events. Students will be able to identify the causes, key aspects, and consequences of specific events such as the American Revolution, the collapse of the Han Dynasty, and the First World War. Students will be able to identify and assess scholarly arguments.
- C. Upper-division courses: Students will demonstrate in-depth knowledge of specific historical events as well as intellectual and social movements and will be able to assess the causes, key

aspects, and influence of these events/movements. Students would be able to explain the causes of the Civil War and explain the views and actions on each side that led to war in 1861 (as opposed to earlier or later). Students will be able to make significant connections between different events and will be able to identify different views and analyze and compare these views.

\*\*\*For benchmarks A, B, and C the criteria will be the grade of C or better on a specific assignment or an evidence based essay on an exam.

**Goal 2:** Students will demonstrate basic writing proficiency and will write papers and evidence based arguments that meet the minimum requirement for these kinds of arguments.

**Definition of writing proficiency:** In order to demonstrate basic writing proficiency students must be able to write a well-organized essay with a thesis if appropriate, and with clearly stated points. Students must demonstrate a sufficient knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary including the ability to use subjects and verbs that agree, to use correct pronouns and to choose the correct words or terms and to cite information to the correct source.

**Student Learning Outcome 2:** Students will write essays and papers that demonstrate their basic writing proficiency.

**Student Learning Outcome 3:** Students will accurately describe historical events and identify and use relevant and sufficient evidence to support a thesis and/ or key points. Students will accurately cite all ideas that are not their own in Turabian or Chicago format.

BENCHMARKS:

**Even students in lower-division G.E. courses must demonstrate a basic proficiency in English in all written work. However, first-year students and non-majors will not be held to exactly the same standard, especially in regard to appropriate word choice and citation format, as upper-division history majors.**

- A. G.E. courses (non-majors): Students will write papers that demonstrate basic writing proficiency and that clearly and accurately state key aspects of historical events, movements, etc. Students will include appropriate and relevant quotes and examples in their papers.
- B. Lower-division courses: Students will demonstrate basic writing proficiency and will clearly state key points, express complex ideas such historical causes and the long-term consequences of events such as the Russian Revolution, and use examples from primary and secondary sources to support their thesis and/or key points.
- C. Upper-division courses: Students will demonstrate their basic writing proficiency and will state key points clearly, will include all appropriate facts, statistics, background information, about historical events, movements, etc. and will use a diverse array of examples and quotes from primary and secondary sources to support and prove their thesis/key points.

D. Capstone Writing Assessment (**History 100W**): Students will identify relevant sources and write a research based paper, using appropriate historical methodology, that includes a valid thesis, evidence from primary and secondary sources, and citations in Turabian or Chicago format. Rubrics are used to assess History 100W papers and it is expected that at least 85% of students will earn a 3 out of 5 on the rubric as well as earning a A or B in the course.

\*\*\*For benchmark A, at least 75% of students are expected to earn a C or better on a specific assignment or an evidence based essay on an exam. For benchmark B and C, at least 75% of students are expected to earn an A or B on a specific assignment or exam essay and a 3 out of 5 on the rubric used to assess assignments submitted by History Majors.

**Goal 3:** Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills that enable them to identify, analyze and utilize information in an effective way.

**Student Learning Outcome 4:** Students will identify and be able to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and will be able to both create and analyze charts, maps, and statistics. In addition to critical thinking, students will demonstrate that they have basic information literacy skills and basic quantitative reasoning skills.

**BENCHMARKS:**

A. G.E. courses (non-majors): Students will demonstrate that they know the basic definitions of a primary and secondary source. Students will determine what information can be obtained from specific charts, graphs, and statistics. Students will be able to create questions that can be answered using the appropriate sources.

B. Lower-Division courses: Students will demonstrate that they can provide a more advanced definition of primary and secondary sources and distinguish between the two. Students will be able to write out points that are valid based upon the data contained in a graph, set of statistics or map. Students will be able to make inferences, or come to conclusions that are valid but not directly stated, based on the data contained in graphs, maps, etc.

C. Upper-Division courses: Students will be able to demonstrate that they can write out a full-definition of primary and secondary sources that indicates how to distinguish between the two and which clearly reflects an understanding of the fact that the same source could be a primary source for research on one historical issue and a secondary source for research on a different issue. Students will be able to analyze charts, statistics, and support advanced evidence based arguments using the data they have gained from their analysis.

\*\*\*For benchmark A it is expected that at least two-thirds of the students will earn a C or better on the specific assignment being assessed. For benchmarks B and C it is expected that more than two-thirds of students will earn an A or a B on the specific assignment being assessed.

**Goal 4:** Students will be able to clearly present accurate information on a historical event in a visual way (power point presentation, diagram, map, chart or graph) or by participating in a class discussion or by giving a verbal presentation.

**Student Learning Outcome 5:** Students will give a verbal presentation (either by commenting during class discussions or by giving a formal presentation) or create a power point or a visual representation that presents complex historical information clearly and accurately.

**BENCHMARKS:**

A. G.E. courses (non-majors): Students will make relevant and significant comments during class discussions.

B. Lower-Division courses: Students will create a visual representation (graph, chart, diagram, exhibit, etc.) based on information from primary and secondary sources. Students will make significant contributions to class discussion by going beyond merely re-stating points from sources and instead making comments that are based on a careful analysis of the assigned reading. Students, in courses where presentations are assigned, will give verbal presentations that analyze sources and draw conclusions.

C. Upper-Division courses: Students will create a visual representation (chart, graph, diagram, exhibit) of information from assigned readings and this representation will demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the material. Students will contribute to class discussions by stating their critical analysis and conclusions they have reached based on the information provided by lecture and readings instead of stating facts or summarizing material. Students will give verbal presentations that analyze primary and secondary sources and draw conclusions.

For benchmark A, it is expected that at least 60% of students will participate and earn a C or better for their discussion grade. For benchmarks B and C, it is expected that more than 75% of students will receive an A or B on a specific assignment or for their discussion grade for the course.

<b>III. Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses X Learning Outcomes)</b>					
History Courses:	Outcome 1 Knowledge	Outcome 2 Writing Skills	Outcome 3 Evidence based arguments	Outcome 4 Critical Thinking Skills	Outcome 5 Oral or Visual presentations
<b>General Education:</b>					
History 11, 12, 20, 21					

<b>Lower Division:</b> History 4		I	I	I	I
History 3,6,7, 8, and 9	R	R	R	R	R
<b>Upper Division: (27 units required):</b>					
<b>U.S. Field Options: (6 units)</b>					
101, 156, 158, 159, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177, 178, 180, 182, 186, 187 188, 194	E	R	E	M	E
<b>Europe Field Options: (6 units)</b>					
103, 104, 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, 117, 118, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 132, 133, 134, 135, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 150, 151, 152	E	R	E	M	E
<b>World Regions Field Options (6 units)</b>					
160, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 176, 183, 192	E	R	E	M	E

Upper Division Required & Capstone:					
<b>History 100W</b>	M	M	M	M	M

#### IV. Assessment Methods

##### A. Direct Measures (at least three)

1. Critical Thinking Assignments: History 4, G.E., Lower-Division Courses, Upper-Division Courses
  - a) Discussion papers requiring students to analyze sources, critical book reviews, papers focused on class discussions readings, library exercises, statistic and film analysis papers
2. Writing Assignments: G.E., Lower-Division Courses, Upper-Division Courses
  - a) Research papers, critical book reviews, précises and discussion papers
3. Verbal or Visual Presentations: History 4, G.E., Lower-Division courses, Upper-Division Courses
  - a) Holocaust Exhibit Projects, Power point presentations, Group Presentations, Book Review Presentations, Class Discussion Presentations
4. Capstone: The Research Paper which constitutes the main requirement for History 100W will be used to assess the skills of students who are about to graduate. In order to assess the extent to which students have improved their skills, while majoring in history and working toward their degree, the final paper in History 4 (taken during the first or second semester as a history major) will be compared to the research paper submitted for History 100W (taken during the year in the program).

##### B. Indirect Measures

1. Exit Survey: Students currently take a survey the semester they apply for graduation. This survey asks students to assess the degree to which the major courses trained them in skills that will be useful for a career in History.

2. Alumni Survey: Alumni will be surveyed in order to determine whether they went into a credential program, graduate program, or obtained a job in history or a related field. Alumni will also be asked how well they feel they were prepared for their continued education or current employment.

**V. Student Learning Outcomes X Assessment Methods Matrix**

<b>Direct Measures:</b>	<b>Outcome 1 Knowledge</b>	<b>Outcome 2 Writing Skills</b>	<b>Outcome 3 Evidence based arguments</b>	<b>Outcome 4 Critical Thinking Skills</b>	<b>Outcome 5 Verbal or Visual presentations</b>
Critical Thinking Assignments	X			X	
Writing Assignments	X	X	X	X	
Verbal or Visual Presentations	X		X		X
Capstone: History 100W Research Paper	X	X	X	X	
<b>Indirect Measures:</b>					
Senior Exit Survey	X	X	X	X	
Alumni Survey	X	X	X	X	

**VI. Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations**

**Year 2011 to 2012**

Pre & post tests in Hist 12 and 20

Senior Exit Survey

**Year 2012 to 2013**

Assessment of Writing Assignments in History 12 using Rubric

Assessment of Research Papers from History Portfolio

Administer Revised Senior Exit Survey and develop Alumni Survey

**Year 2013 to 2014**

History 100W Research Paper

Senior Exit Survey

Send out Alumni survey

History 186 paper assignments

History 21 content and critical thinking assessment

**Year 2014 to 2015**

Writing Assignment in History 20 or History 21

Critical Thinking Assignments in History 4

Senior Exit Survey

**Year 2015-2016**

Verbal or Visual Presentation in Upper –Division course

History 4 Papers and History 100W Research Paper Comparison

Senior Exit Survey

**VII. Closing the Loop - Summary Evaluation, Curriculum Adjustment, and Reporting**

**Closing the Loop: Year 2012-2013**

The Department of History has altered its assessment plan in order to reduce the number of outcomes it is measuring and to more effectively assess the fundamental aspects of the program that prepare students for their post B.A. pursuits. The department has also included, for the first time, a direct measure of the extent to which students are exposed to professional development knowledge and opportunities during the program. The department has also revised its assessment measures, in part because of the changes to the student learning outcomes and in part due to our examination of previous assessments which suggested ways in which they could be improved. We have revised the Senior Exit Survey because the responses, although valuable, were extremely broad and diverse and so we have more narrowly focused our questions in order to obtain more specific information on particular aspects of the program. We have also created an alumni survey and two of the questions in the exit survey were



revised and incorporated into the alumni survey. During the last academic year, 2011-2012, the department evaluated the pre and post tests given in History 12 and History 20. These evaluations demonstrate that despite the fact that most students in these courses are non-majors, that they have gained a relatively small but significant amount of content knowledge. The department reviewed senior exit surveys for several years and based upon these surveys it was clear that students felt that the professors in the department were extremely qualified and were providing in-depth content knowledge. It was also clear that students had been exposed to historical method, historical theory, and required to write papers in a number of courses that required them to demonstrate their ability to utilize historical method and historiography. It was also clear from these surveys that a very large number of our majors were either in the credential program while completing a degree in history or intended to enter the program upon completing their B.A. in History . As a result of the information from these surveys, the department has proposed a change to the major. Instead of requiring majors to take Hist 1 and 2 (Western Civilization), the department is proposing requiring majors to take Hist 20 and 21 (World History) which is one of the requirements of the Social Science Credential program. This would effectively reduce the number of units required for credential students by 6 units and it would enhance the educational experience of non-credential history majors by providing them with a much broader perspective. Students will still gain knowledge in regard to Europe but will simultaneously gain knowledge about all areas of the world and about the global interactions that shaped the development of specific areas.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the department will carry out three assessment activities. The department has already revised the senior exit survey and will give it to graduating seniors at the end of the semester and the department also developed an alumni survey that it will give, as a pilot activity, to between 10 and 20 alumni this semester, and then will be formally sent out to alumni next year. The department also continued to give pre and post tests in History 20 and will compare the results of the tests for this year with the results from previous years. Finally, the department will assess the two papers from upper-division classes submitted by about 40 students this semester and will analyze these papers in order to determine the content knowledge, research and writing abilities of students who are in the process of completing the program. Although the department expects to gain valuable insight from assessing these papers using a common rubric, we have realized that in order to really measure the level and range of students that we need to collect papers from all students in the same upper-division course and will begin to collect and analyze papers from individual upper-division courses instead of having students select two of the papers they have written for upper-division classes and submit them to the Blackboard portfolio site.

The department will keep more detailed records, including examples of student work beginning this semester and will continue to conduct multiple assessments per year as indicated on our time-line.

#### **Closing the Loop 2013-2014:**

The History Department coordinator made copies of assessment reports by different professors and examples of student work and put these in a binder and also wrote a supplemental report on assessment (attached to the annual report) that provided an in-depth summary of its 2012-2013 assessment activities. During the summer of 2013, the History Department further revised its SLO's and assessment measures in order to align them more closely and to utilize more effective ways to measure

students skills. The department will discuss the results of the 2012-2013 assessment activities, the revised SOAP and planned assessment activities for 2013-2014 at a History Department Meeting in August of 2013.

E-portfolio Initiative:

The History Department will require students in at least one section of History 4 and in at least one upper-division course to submit their assignments that will be used for assessment purposes via an e-portfolio they create. The History Department will determine whether or not students utilizing the e-portfolio seem to be more engaged in their learning and whether or not the e-portfolio makes assessment more efficient and manageable and will determine the methods to be used for assessment after a department meeting at the end of 2013 to consider these issues.