Department of History Undergraduate Program Assessment Plan

(Adopted March 4, 2015)

Mission

The Department of History seeks to provide its students with an appreciation of diverse human cultures and experiences through a study of our past, while at the same time developing crucial cognitive and behavioral skills, particularly those involving communication, critical reasoning, and research. In addition to providing all UND students with these skills and the background in history that is an essential part of any liberal arts education, we prepare our majors for careers in education, law, public service, journalism, government, and academia.

The academic research agendas of Department faculty aim to facilitate these goals, and to contribute actively to the most important historiographical discourses within our profession. Department faculty take a holistic approach to research and teaching, basing our courses upon the most recent historical research, and orienting all our academic projects to fit the needs of our professional, educational, and communal constituencies. Just as the department's students and faculty engage actively and productively with colleagues at UND and throughout the academic community, we also seek to find ways to serve and to promote greater understanding of the community, state, nation, and world.

Learning Goals for History Undergraduate Major

The Department of History seeks to prepare our majors to:

1. Have accurate content knowledge
2. Be able to think like a historian (Critical Thinking)
3. Be able to read like a historian (Critical Reading)
4. Be able to talk like a historian (Oral Communication)
5. Be able to write like a historian (Written Communication)
6. Complete original historical research, and present that research in written and oral form
Learning Goals and Assessments by Course (adopted November 5, 2014)

Programmatic assessment for the B.A. in History will capture student learning over the course of the major by assessing student learning in three required courses:

1. History 240: Historian’s Craft
2. History 347: Seminar
3. History 440: Research

Each of these courses seeks to develop the core Critical Thinking, Communication, and Information Literacy skills outlined in our learning goals for the major. Rubrics target the specific learning outcomes expected in each course.

Our specific learning goals for each of these courses is as follows:

Survey Courses:

Use course examinations and/or essay assignments to assess student learning:

I. Have basic content knowledge related to that course

II. Begin to think like a historian (Critical Thinking)
   a. Trace change over time
   b. Analyze relationships of cause and effect
   c. Appreciate viewpoints of different individuals and groups of people
   d. Appreciate continuities and discontinuities between the past and present
HIST 240: Historian’s Craft

I. Have a basic understanding of the history of the discipline

II. Understand that interpretations of the past change over time (Historiography)

III. Be able to read like a historian (Critical Reading)
  
a. Analyze primary sources
    i. Draw information from a variety of primary sources
    ii. Identify biases within primary sources
  
b. Analyze secondary sources
    i. Identify and summarize the author’s argument and use of primary sources

IV. Be able to write like a historian (Written Communication)
  
a. Produce an essay of approximately 1,000 words that makes a persuasive argument supported by appropriate evidence

V. Demonstrate basic research skills
  
  1. Formulate a research question
  2. Identify and access secondary sources related to that research question
  3. Identify and access primary sources to answer that research question
  4. Cite sources appropriately
     a. Use Chicago-style footnotes
     b. Provide a research bibliography that distinguishes between primary and secondary sources
HIST 347: Seminar

After completing History 347, History majors should:

I. Have accurate content knowledge related to that course’s theme

II. Be able to read like a historian (Critical Reading)
   a. Identify and utilize appropriate primary sources to answer a research question
   b. Identify important historiographic debates related to the course theme/content

III. Complete original historical research, and present that research in written and oral form

   1. Formulate a viable research question
   2. Identify and access appropriate secondary sources related to that research question
   3. Identify and access appropriate primary sources to answer that research question
   4. Place those secondary sources into conversation with one another (historiography) to:
      a. Compare and contrast the primary arguments of each text
      b. Provide historical context for primary sources
   5. Deliver a 5- to 10-minute presentation to the class that:
      a. describes the research question
      b. describes the sources and research methods used
      c. summarizes their conclusions
      d. answers questions related to their research
   6. Produce a research paper of approximately 10 pages (3000 words) that integrates all of the above
      a. Makes a persuasive argument that is supported using primary sources
      b. Places that argument in historical and historiographic context using secondary sources
      c. Cites those sources appropriately
         i. Uses Chicago-style footnotes
         ii. Provides a research bibliography that distinguishes between primary and secondary sources
HIST 440: Research

Complete original historical research, and present that research in written and oral form

1. Formulate a viable research question
2. Identify and access appropriate secondary sources to provide background for and support primary research to answer that research question
3. Identify and access appropriate primary sources to answer that research question
4. Place those secondary sources into conversation with one another (historiography) to:
   a. Compare and contrast the primary arguments of each text
   b. Identify gaps within the existing literature
   c. Identify primary sources that could be used to fill that gap
5. Deliver a 10-minute public presentation that:
   a. describes the research question
   b. describes the sources and research methods used
   c. summarizes their conclusions
   d. answers questions related to their research
6. Produce a research paper of article length (approximately 10,000 words) that integrates all of the above
   a. Makes an argument
   b. Supports that argument based on primary sources
   c. Places that argument in context (historiography) using secondary sources
   d. Cites those sources appropriately
      i. Uses Chicago-style footnotes effectively
      ii. Provides a comprehensive bibliography that distinguishes between primary and secondary sources
B.A. in History (Option A or Option B):

After completing a B.A. in History, a History major should:

I. Have accurate content knowledge
   a. basic knowledge of World history, Western Civilization, and North American history
   b. deeper knowledge of several thematic areas drawn from elective courses

II. Be able to think like a historian (Critical Thinking)
   a. Trace change over time
   b. Analyze relationships of cause and effect
   c. Appreciate viewpoints of different individuals and groups of people
   d. Appreciate continuities and discontinuities between the past and present
   e. Construct an informed argument about something that occurred in the past

III. Be able to read like a historian (Critical Reading)
   a. Analyze primary sources
      i. Glean information from a variety of primary sources
      ii. Identify biases within primary sources
      iii. Place primary sources in conversation with one another
      iv. Make an argument based on evidence drawn from a variety of primary sources
   b. Analyze secondary sources
      i. Identify and summarize the author’s argument
      ii. Identify and assess the effectiveness of the author’s use of primary sources
      iii. Identify authorial biases within secondary sources
      iv. Compare two or more secondary sources
      v. Identify important historiographic debates related to the chosen theme
      vi. Engage in a historiographic debate related to their chosen theme

IV. Be able to talk like a historian (Oral Communication)
   a. Discuss primary and secondary sources (see above)
   b. Present original research (see below)

V. Be able to write like a historian (Written Communication)
   a. Formulate an original argument
   b. Support that argument utilizing appropriate evidence
      i. Argument should be based on primary sources
      ii. Argument should be placed in historical and historiographic context using secondary sources

VI. Complete original historical research, and present that research in written and oral form
   (Information Literacy, Critical Thinking, Critical Reading, Oral Communication, Written Communication)
   7. Formulate a viable research question
8. Identify and access appropriate secondary sources to provide background for and support primary research to answer that research question

9. Identify and access appropriate primary sources to answer that research question

10. Place those secondary sources into conversation with one another (historiography) to:
   a. Compare and contrast the primary arguments of each text
   b. Identify gaps within the existing literature
   c. Identify primary sources that could be used to fill that gap

11. Deliver a 10-minute public presentation that:
   a. describes the research question
   b. describes the sources and research methods used
   c. summarizes their conclusions
   d. answers questions related to their research

12. Produce a research paper of article length (approximately 10,000 words) that integrates all of the above
   a. Makes an argument
   b. Supports that argument based on primary sources
   c. Places that argument in context (historiography) using secondary sources
   d. Cites those sources appropriately
      i. Uses Chicago-style footnotes effectively
      ii. Provides a comprehensive bibliography that distinguishes between primary and secondary sources
**Data Collection**

Programmatic assessment for the B.A. in History will be focused on the three required courses: HIST 240, HIST 347, and HIST 440. Instructors in each of these courses will assess student products utilizing rubrics developed for each course (see below). In addition, student products will be collected into electronic portfolios. Instructors will submit this data to the Director of Undergraduate Studies, who will be responsible for reminding faculty to complete assessment of appropriate assignments and to collect portfolio materials each term. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will collect and maintain assessment data, and will post copies of that assessment data to a departmental Blackboard site.

Every three years the Undergraduate Committee, under the leadership of the Director of Undergraduate Studies, will analyze the data and from it create a report that contains the data, draws conclusions from the data and make recommendations for changes to improve student learning within the major. This report will be shared with department faculty at a department meeting.

**History 240 Assessment**

In HIST 240, students will complete a sequence of several assignments, all of which will become part of their electronic portfolio. Most of these materials will also be assessed by the instructor according to rubrics.

1. Copies of journal notes on materials read for class, or copies of tests related to historiography (for inclusion in the student’s portfolio only)
2. Article synopsis/précis (to be assessed according to attached rubric)
3. Critical book review (to be assessed according to attached rubric)
4. Research paper outline and annotated bibliography (to be assessed according to attached rubric)
5. Research paper of at least 1,000 words (to be assessed according to attached rubric)

**History 347 and History 440 Assessment**

In contrast to HIST 240, HIST 347 and HIST 440 assessment will focus entirely on the student’s final research paper. While instructors may also include other course materials in the student’s portfolio, only the research paper will be assessed according to a common rubric.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>No Mastery</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Apprentice</th>
<th>Mastery</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student formulates a research question</strong></td>
<td>No effort has gone into this. Little more than a poorly stated “topic” sentence</td>
<td>Far too broad and ambitious. Too little thought and effort has gone into defining the question</td>
<td>Vaguely stated, reader will have trouble knowing where the research is leading</td>
<td>Question is carefully delineated but significance not fully explained</td>
<td>Clear understanding of limiting a research question to a useful and doable project. Significance is clearly stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student can identify and access secondary sources related to that research question</strong></td>
<td>No effort has gone into this. Student employs randomly selected secondary sources</td>
<td>Some effort has gone into this, but the student has not linked the secondary sources to the research question</td>
<td>Basic understanding of some of the key secondary sources, but a few crucial works have been omitted</td>
<td>Solid understanding of the key secondary sources but their relationship to the project needs to be better defined</td>
<td>Clear understanding of the historiography surrounding the topic</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student can identify and access primary sources to answer that research question</strong></td>
<td>No effort has gone into this. The primary sources selected are inappropriate</td>
<td>Some effort has gone into this, but the student has not linked the few primary sources selected to the research question</td>
<td>Basic understanding of how to get at primary source material, but little idea of how to apply it to the research question</td>
<td>Solid understanding of how to get at primary source material but student needs to consider how to make better use of those sources</td>
<td>Clear understanding of how to get at and make use of primary source data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student can cite sources appropriately</strong></td>
<td>No effort has gone into this. Student does not even attempt to use Turabian/Chicago Manual style.</td>
<td>Some effort has gone into this, but the student has mixed MLA, APA or other citation styles</td>
<td>Basic use of Turabian-style citations, but footnote and bibliographic entries are wildly inconsistent</td>
<td>Solid use of Turabian-style citations, but a few inconsistencies exist.</td>
<td>Excellent and consistent use of Turabian-style citations</td>
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### HIST 240: Article Synopsis/Précis and Book Review Rubric

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student can analyze secondary sources</td>
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<td>Student can summarize the author’s argument</td>
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<td>Student displays understanding of the author’s argument</td>
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<td>Student displays understanding of how the author’s argument affects the larger historiography</td>
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<td>Student writes clearly</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question and Thesis:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>argumentative rather than descriptive</td>
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<td><strong>Argument:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis is supported persuasively with accurate and relevant evidence</td>
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<td><strong>Research Methods:</strong></td>
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<td>Effective use of quantitative and/or qualitative forms of analysis and appropriate use of citation</td>
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<td><strong>Primary Sources:</strong></td>
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<td>Effectively analyzes an appropriate range of primary sources</td>
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<td><strong>Content:</strong></td>
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<td>Accurate understanding of the topic’s historical background and the context of the primary sources themselves</td>
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<td><strong>Writing:</strong></td>
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<td>Clarity, appropriate tone, effective organization, mechanics</td>
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# HIST 347: Research Essay Assessment Rubric

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Department of History Undergraduate Program Assessment Plan AY11-12

1. A statement of the mission of the department/program.

The Depart of History’s mission is to ‘offer undergraduate and graduate courses in most fields of History, to provide service and academic support to the University and State, to promote a better understanding of the community, state, nation and world through research and writing.’ (1979)

2. A statement of the desired student learning goals of the academic program.

A History Major provides numerous Affective, Cognitive and Behavioral learning outcomes for its students but in regards to assessment the Department has decided to focus upon the Behavioral.

The Behavioral skills that the Department will assess are:

A] Informational Literacy

B] Critical Thinking Skills

C] Communication Skills

3. A statement of objectives, which further characterize each of the goals and state obtainable and documentable outcomes contributing specifically to the attainment of each goal.

The Departmental objectives in regards to these Behavioral Skills of Informational Literacy, Critical Thinking, and Communication are clearly related to the methods of historical research, thought and writing. Thus, we expect our students to be able to locate, read and analyze the necessary primary and secondary sources that allow them to explore and understand the past. Next, we want them to be able to take this knowledge and understanding and turn it into a clear, cohesive and structured argument where they interpret the past. The first section of this, which deals with historical research including using sources/evidence to construct an argument, relates to the Behavioral Skills of Informational Literacy and Critical Thinking. The second section, creating a written argument, relates to Communication Skills as a historical argument needs to be both well-structured and well-written.

4. A description of how desired learning outcomes are linked with the courses/experiences in which outcomes are to be attained.

For its majors, the History Department, within both Option A and Option B, require two core classes within which these Behavioral Skills are clearly taught; they are HIST240 The Historians Craft and HIST440 Research [this is our major capstone class along with our ES capstone class]. HIST240 is designed to teach these Behavioral skills while HIST440 allows our majors to demonstrate their mastery of these skills. In between these two required courses, our History majors take 21 hours of electives within the major the majority of which are upper-level [300-400] classes. Based upon an internally

1 Passed at a Departmental Meeting on 4 April 2012.
conducted departmental survey within the AY10-11, it was found that the vast majority of our 300 & 400 level classes directly engage with these Behavioral Skills.

5. Descriptions of the specific assessment methods to be used to assess each learning outcome, including a description of criteria that will be used to determine whether goals for student learning have been met.

To assess these goals within the History Major, a rubric that gauges Informational Literacy, Critical Thinking and Communication Skills within a research paper will be utilized. The Rubric will assess a student’s performance within five categories: Argument, Historical Methods, Sources, Content, and Structure. Sources falls under the category of Informational Literacy while Historical Methods relates to Critical Thinking and two under Communication [Content and Structure] with the final one, Argument, relating to all three. For each category, the work will be assessed in one of four categories: Excellent, Good, Fair and Weak.

6. A statement of the timeline along which assessment data will be collected, analyzed, interpreted and documented.

Data in HIST240 & HIST440 will be collected every semester. Also, once every academic year one 300 and one 400 level class that requires the creation of a historical argument in written form will be assessed for the History majors enrolled in the course. At the end of every three-year cycle, which represents a student’s movement though the major from HIST240 to HIST440, the data will be analyzed and a report will be presented to the Department.

7. Identification of who will be responsible for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and documenting the results of assessment.

The Department’s Undergraduate Committee is tasked with this process.

8. A description of the process that will be implemented to document and communicate that the results of assessment have been used to inform instructional and curricular improvement.

Every three years the Undergraduate Committee will analyze the data and from it create a report that contains the data, draws conclusions from the data and make recommendations for changes to improve student learning within the major.
UND, Department of History, Assessment Plan 2005

Based upon the results of discussions and deliberations of two Department-wide teaching days, participation in an assessment workshop and several further discussions within the department and by members of the assessment committee, the following assessment plan is submitted for discussion, amendment and eventual approval.

Overall, the department agreed, on November 6, 2002, that the following - broken down into three broad areas - were the desired learning outcomes for our students:

1) Affective goals for students enrolled in history courses:
   - To stimulate an appetite for history
   - To encourage multi-cultural awareness and appreciation
   - To foster a commitment to lifelong learning
   - To foster the study and teaching of history
   - To grasp their personal historical agency
   - To understand their roles as citizens of the world

2) Behavioral goals for students enrolled in history courses:
   - To instill critical thinking abilities
   - To foster writing skills
   - To improve communications skills

3) Cognitive goals for students enrolled in history courses:
   - To master basic content, i.e., "the facts"
   - To understand how historians interpret the past; i.e., theory and methodology
   - To relate geography and literature to history
   - To understand cultural differences
   - To be able to locate information
   - To be able to integrate and synthesize material
   - To understand how groups of people have come to important societal decisions

Based upon these goals the following type of assessment procedure is proposed. First, with regard to majors, the Department will maintain a portfolio on each student, reflecting her/his work in our core courses, History 240 and History 440. Work from other courses in the major would be too disparate for a valid comparison among students of their development as historians, although the department reserves the right to reevaluate this decision in the future.

The portfolio should include "work product" from History 240 (journals, workbooks, etc.), as well as the History 440 paper. An examination of this material is meant to reveal writing and research skills, as well as the development of an "historical imagination" over a clear period. The inclusion of comments on the presentation now required of History 440 students will allow insight into oral communication skills, as well as interpersonal skills. (The assessment committee would also suggest that an oral report component be added to History 240 - the evaluations of which would be added to the portfolio - thereby adding another dimension to our evaluation of
majors over a period of time.) The portfolio will be archived by either the Department Chair, or by the Chair of the assessment committee.

Beyond the portfolios, majors will be assessed in the three aforementioned categories of learning (writing, research and historical imagination) via an exit interview. (See below for a copy of the proposed exit survey.) It is also proposed that majors will also be surveyed, particularly with regard to affective learning goals, at a point some time (5 to 10 years) following graduation.

A rubric to ensure uniformity of assessment across the committee will be developed to measure learning, as well as to permit individual and aggregate data collection.

In addition to assessment of our majors via portfolio, exit interview, and alumni interviews, our general student population will also be assessed. With regard to General Education Requirement-fulfilling courses, it was determined to include on the syllabi of History 101, 102, 103, 104 how each of the primary goals of the department is addressed. Hence, a book review assignment might be noted as a behavioral learning goal, discussion groups might be listed as behavior learning oriented, and text and lecture might be included as cognitive learning oriented.

The department also determined to include pre/post course tests as part of its assessment plan regarding History 101, 102, 103, and 104. The test questions listed below are designed to assess student learning outcomes in a very general sense. Thus, there are five short answer questions which deal fairly specifically with core questions which are important to historians. The sixth question helps us to address issues of critical thinking, written communication and a few of the cognitive goals listed above (for example, “To understand how historians interpret the past; i.e., theory and methodology,” “To be able to locate information” and “To be able to integrate and synthesize material”). The assessment committee also feels that it would be an extremely good idea to administer this pre/post course test at the beginning of Hist. 240 and at the conclusion of Hist. 440. These results would be added to each student’s portfolio.

We will run this test on a sample basis in a section of History 102, primarily so that we can use the completed tests to develop a rubric for assessing the written answer. These written answers - for the survey courses - will be sampled. In other words, not all of the writing samples will need to be subjected to the rubric assessment in every course, merely a representative sample.

**Department of History: 100 level Pre/Post-course quiz**

Please note: the results of this quiz will not be part of your final grade. The sole purpose of the
quiz - which will be administered at both the beginning and end of the semester - is to help us determine how well the Department is doing at fostering certain key skills related to history.

1. Historians use primary sources to understand the past. What is a primary source?
   a) an account from someone who witnessed the event in question
   b) a newspaper article, journal entry or letter
   c) government documents
   d) all of the above

2. Historians argue that national identity, gender and class identity are social constructs. What is a "social construct"?
   a) a social phenomenon that is always present and consistent no matter the circumstances
   b) a social phenomenon that is created in a given historical time and place
   c) a social phenomenon that determines people's behavior
   d) all of the above

3. What is historiography?
   a) the study of history
   b) the combined study of geography and history
   c) the study of how history has been written
   d) the study of artifacts

4) While the study of history is often viewed as being primarily concerned with names, dates and famous events, most historians use these "facts" in order to,
   a) interpret the past
   b) understand the present
   c) plan for the future
   d) all of the above

5) What is the difference between a novel and a study in the field of history?
   a) novels are about the present, works of history are about the past
   b) novels are works of fiction, histories are non-fiction
   c) novels never have footnotes, histories always have footnotes
   d) novels are always well-written, histories are not well-written

6) On a separate sheet of paper take ten minutes and write a brief essay which addresses the following matter.

   Imagine that you are handed a piece of paper from sometime in the past - it could be a letter, a contract, a diary, a government document, anything from the past. It is your job to conclude something about the time period from which this piece of paper comes. How would you go about doing this? What questions would you ask of this piece of paper? What information might you look for? Where might you look for further information?

Sample Exit Interview (to be administered as part of History 440)
All of these questions call for written responses. Aside from #1 all of these questions will be introduced at the outset of 440 so that students will be able to reflect upon these issues during their capstone experience. It will be made clear to the students that the results of these “exit interviews” will not be part of their graded work and will not be analyzed until after the final grades have been recorded:

1) Complete the post-test survey and essay.

2) How has your experience as a History Major affected your outlook? For example, has it altered the way you think about yourself and the world? Has it had any impact on the way you see yourself as a citizen of a larger national and world community?

3) How would you describe your development (in terms of skills, intellectual development and acquisition of knowledge) over your course of study?

4) In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the History program?