

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
College of Arts and Sciences

History—Program Assessment Plan

Program Learning Goals

For Core classes, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of a significant span of history over a wide geographic area;
2. Articulate in writing and discussion their understanding of the ways significant historical forces (e.g., colonization, industrialization, war, social movements) shape the development of societies and civilizations;
3. Exhibit historical consciousness by understanding past societies and civilizations in their own contexts and times;
4. Demonstrate a sense of how historical thinking can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present.

For upper-division classes, students will be able to:

5. Demonstrate a substantive understanding of human history across a number of time periods and/or geographic settings;
6. Become acquainted with the historical method through analyzing historical documents, evaluating historical interpretations, and understanding historiography;
7. Conduct and present their own historical research;
8. Partake in the cosmopolitan spirit of the University, striving to increase their intellectual and moral sensitivity to differences of religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and nationality that are often misunderstood.

Learning outcome 1:

Our History graduates will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of a significant span of history over a wide geographic area

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot demonstrate or can only in a very limited way demonstrate any understanding of a significant span of history.

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically demonstrate their understanding of a significant span of history.

Exemplary: Students can demonstrate (in essays, discussions, and oral presentations) a basic understanding of a significant span of history (i.e., the Tang-Song period in Chinese history) over a wide geographic area (i.e., China, Central Asia, and Japan).

Assessment methods: Essays, embedded questions, classroom discussions, and oral presentations.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the second year (AY 2009-2010) of the University's Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2010, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member whose course syllabus includes learning outcome #1, and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #1.

Learning outcome 2:

Our History graduates will be able to articulate in writing and discussion their understanding of the ways significant historical forces (e.g., colonization, industrialization, war, social movements) shape the development of societies and civilizations

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot demonstrate or can only in a very limited way demonstrate any understanding of significant historical forces such as colonization, industrialization, war, and social movements.

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically demonstrate their understanding of significant historical forces such as colonization, industrialization, war, and social movements.

Exemplary: Students can comprehensively and accurately articulate in writing and discussion their understanding of the ways significant historical forces (e.g., the European colonization of East Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries) have shaped the development of societies and civilizations (e.g., the growth of nationalism and industrialization in East Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries).

Assessment methods: Essays, embedded questions, classroom discussions, and oral presentations.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the first year (AY 2008-2009) of the University's Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2009, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #2.

Learning outcome 3:

Our History graduates will be able to exhibit historical consciousness by understanding past societies and civilizations in their own contexts and times

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot demonstrate an understanding of past societies and civilizations in their own contexts and times

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically demonstrate their understanding of past societies and civilizations in their own contexts and times

Exemplary: Students can comprehensively and persuasively articulate in writing and discussion their understanding of past societies and civilizations in their own contexts and times

Assessment methods: Essays, embedded questions, classroom discussions, and oral presentations.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the third year (AY 2010-2011) of the University's Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2011, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #3.

Learning outcome 4:

Our History graduates will be able to demonstrate a sense of how historical thinking can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present.

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot demonstrate how historical thinking can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically demonstrate how historical thinking can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present

Exemplary: Students can comprehensively and persuasively articulate in writing and discussion their sense of how historical thinking can establish a valuable framework for considering ethical issues in the past and present (e.g., the US government's decision to use nuclear weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki during WWII; or the Japanese government's reluctance to completely accept responsibility for WWII).

Assessment methods: Essays, embedded questions, classroom discussions, and oral presentations.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the fourth year (AY 2011-2012) of the University's initial Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2012, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #4.

Learning outcome 5:

Our History graduates will be able to demonstrate a substantive understanding of human history across a number of time periods and/or geographic settings

** (Note: This Learning Outcome is very similar to Learning Outcome #1. However, it demands that the student be able to demonstrate a greater degree of awareness and conceptual ability because it requires greater historical comparisons over time and space.)

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot demonstrate a substantive understanding of human history across a number of time periods and/or geographic settings

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically demonstrate a substantive understanding of human history across a number of time periods and/or geographic settings

Exemplary: Students can comprehensively and accurately demonstrate a substantive understanding of human history across a number of time periods and/or geographic settings

Assessment methods: Essays, embedded questions, classroom discussions, oral presentations, and term papers. Only upper division courses will be assessed on this learning outcome.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the fifth year (AY 2012-2013) of the University's initial Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2013, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #5.

Learning outcome 6:

Our History graduates will be able to become acquainted with the historical method through analyzing historical documents, evaluating historical interpretations, and understanding historiography. (this is the original text approved by the Department in 2005, I believe)

** (Note: I would like to rephrase this learning outcome so that it reads as follows:

demonstrate knowledge of and competency in the historical method by analyzing historical documents (especially primary sources), evaluating competing historical interpretations, and showing awareness of historiography as a special subfield of history.

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot demonstrate competency in the historical method, cannot identify or use primary sources, have difficulty with or resist evaluating competing historical interpretations, and are not aware of historiography as a special subfield of history.

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically demonstrate competency in the historical method, i.e., by infrequent or inappropriate use of historical documents (especially primary sources), in one-sidedly evaluating competing historical interpretations, and showing little awareness of historiography as a special subfield of history.

Exemplary: Students can comprehensively and accurately demonstrate knowledge of and competency in the historical method by analyzing historical documents (especially primary sources), evaluating competing historical interpretations, and showing awareness of historiography as a special subfield of history.

Assessment methods: Essays, embedded questions, classroom discussions, oral presentations, and term papers. History 175 and all upper division courses will be assessed on this learning outcome.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the sixth year (AY 2013-2014) of the University's initial Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2014, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #6.

Learning outcome 7:

Our History graduates will be able to conduct and present their own historical research

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot conduct and present their own historical research

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically conduct and present their own historical research

Exemplary: Students can conduct and present their own historical research.

Assessment methods: Periodic oral reports during the course; producing a lengthy paper (25 pages); presentation at a Departmental-organized symposium. The 400 level seminars will be asked to assess learning outcome #7.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the seventh year (AY 2014-2015) of the University's initial Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2015, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member teaching a 400 level seminar and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #7.

Learning outcome 8:

Our History graduates will be able to partake in the cosmopolitan spirit of the University, striving to increase their intellectual and moral sensitivity to differences of religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and nationality that are often misunderstood.

Assessment rubric:

Below expectations: Students cannot demonstrate (in their writing or oral presentations) intellectual and moral sensitivity to differences of religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and nationality.

Minimally acceptable: Students can partially or sporadically demonstrate (in their writing or oral presentations) intellectual and moral sensitivity to differences of religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and nationality.

Exemplary: Students can demonstrate (in their writing or oral presentations) intellectual and moral sensitivity to differences of religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and nationality.

Assessment methods: Essays, embedded questions, classroom discussions, oral presentations, and term papers.

Time frame: This assessment should be ongoing but will be focused initially on the eighth year (AY 2015-2016) of the University's initial Three Year Plan (2008-2011) for Assessment. By May 31, 2016, the results of the assessment will be summarized and distributed to the faculty of the History Department.

Who assesses: The Department Chair coordinates the overall assessment process.

How data will be used to improve the History Department curriculum: After receiving the assessment reports from each faculty member and summarizing the assessment results, the Department Chair will initiate a discussion (at the earliest possible subsequent department meeting) of changing or enhancing curricular strategies that would improve the results of learning outcome #8.