

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary

History Department, BA Degree

College of Liberal Arts

2014-15 and 2015-16

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Date: May 20, 2016

1. Assessment information collected

The History Department's Outcomes Assessment relies on two sources of information. First, it asks graduating seniors to complete an Exit Statement about their experience in the major. Second, it uses a Senior Thesis research paper and rubric to assess the skills the department attempts to teach to students in the BA program. The department then meets to discuss the data and areas in need of improvement in the students and in the History curriculum.

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

The exit statements were all generally positive about their experience in the major. They tended to highlight the excellence of the History faculty in terms of expertise, the quality of instruction, and their dedication to students. Their criticism tended to be focused the dearth of course offerings, something that cannot be helped because of the size of the department and the program.

The Senior Thesis papers and rubric indicated that the department's decision to emphasize writing in all upper division courses was showing some efficacy. The papers appear to show qualitative improvements in all areas of the rubric. The Department has decided to continue in this emphasis in the coming years.

3. Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above

The faculty also noted another source of data not officially on the department's SLOA plan: The oral presentations of the Senior Thesis students. All faculty attend this event—one of the capstone moments for the students in the BA program. The faculty decided that it needs to emphasize oral presentations skills as well as written work. The curriculum will be changed to offer more opportunities for presentations in all of the upper division courses and the faculty will collaborate this coming AY 2015-16 to develop new guidelines for grading these presentations and a new rubric for assessing them as well.

4. Identify the faculty members involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting

The Department faculty met on May 2, 2016 for its SLOA discussion. It discussed the data from AY 2014-15 and AY 2015-16. Those present at this meeting included: Dr. Terrence Cole, Dr. Mary Ehrlander, Dr. Walter Skya, Dr. Diana Di Stefano, and Dr. John Heaton, History Department Chair.